

THE Spiritual Magazine.

Vol. III.]

AUGUST, 1862.

[No. 8.

SPIRITUALISM IN BIOGRAPHY.—OBERLIN— ZSCHOKKE—LAVATER—GOETHE.

WHILE denial and derision of spiritual beliefs spread rapidly over the continent during the latter part of the last century, there were yet many of the wise and good men of that time, in whose lives and works we may find evidence and illustration of spiritual agencies operating among men during their mortal pilgrimage. Of this, in the present paper, I propose to adduce a few well-known instances.

The memory of Oberlin, the good pastor of the Ban de la Roche, the "*cher papa*" of his affectionate flock, will be cherished as long as goodness—as true nobility of character are revered. The Ban, or district, of which he was the curé, was wild and sterile (called by the Germans *steinthal*—valley of stone), its inhabitants were exclusively a poor and ignorant rural population; but Oberlin accepted the charge with as much joy as a fashionable preacher would welcome the call to a deanery or a bishopric. He was not only their religious pastor, but their secular instructor and adviser—their physician and civil engineer—the peace-maker and civilizer—the friend and father of his people. He caused bridges to be erected and roads to be built (encouraging the peasants to the work by his own example). He prevented a considerable portion of their land from being overflowed, by deepening the river; he had school-houses built, and teachers educated; he originated infant-schools, put youths out apprentices, introduced into the district trades essential to the progress of civilization (particularly cotton-spinning, and improved implements of agriculture, supplying them at cost price), provided them with better qualities of seeds, instructed them in horticulture, fertilized their meadows by a good system of irrigation, and formed an agricultural society, which he connected with a central one at Strasburg, and with its assistance made an annual award of prizes to those peasants who distinguished themselves in the grafting

and culture of fruit trees, and in rearing or improving the breed of cattle. He exerted himself in bettering the sanitary condition of the peasantry, so that "neat cottages with glazed windows, chimneys, and dry flooring, were substituted for the old dismal huts." These were surrounded with neat little gardens, and "instead of the indigence and misery which formerly characterized the villagers and their dwellings, they now put on the garb of rural beauty and happiness." He also established for them a circulating library; and, that they might the better understand some of the first principles of natural philosophy, introduced an electrical machine and other philosophical instruments. He was the general arbiter of all disputes in the district and neighbourhood, and thus prevented litigation. In particular, it gave him great happiness that he succeeded by his mediation in the satisfactory settlement of a long and ruinous law-suit which was carrying on between the peasantry and the seigneurs of the territory. He extirpated beggary from the surrounding country by finding employment for those who had become mendicants, requiring useful work of some kind from all who were capable of labour as a condition of relief; and established a dispensary from which medicines were distributed gratis.

In order that the peasantry might not suffer by the depreciation of the *assignats* introduced during the French Revolution, he accepted for twenty-five years this worthless paper, at its nominal value, till he had at his own cost cleared the Ban de la Roche and its environs of every *assignat*. While giving so much time to promote the temporal welfare of his flock, he did not neglect their religious instruction. He did not indeed plague the peasantry with theological subtleties, but preached that which he himself exemplified—pure, simple, practical Christianity, and paid pastoral visits to every cottage. Once a week he conducted a service in German for the benefit of those to whom that language was more familiar than the French. "Nothing could be more primitive or affectionate than these meetings, which resembled the assemblage of a family circle. The women listened to him while going on with their work;* and now and then the pastor would break off his discourse, and after taking a pinch from his snuff-box, send it round the congregation. After having pursued his discourse for half an hour, he would stop and say, 'Well, my children, are you not tired? Have you not had enough?' His auditors would generally reply, 'No, papa; go on; we should like to hear a little more;' and the good old man would resume,

* He persuaded his female hearers to knit stockings on these occasions, not for themselves, but for their poorer neighbours. It was, he said, a work of charity, and need neither distract their attention nor diminish their devotion.

putting the same question at intervals, till he observed that attention was beginning to flag; or, perceiving that he spoke with less ease, the audience thanked him for what he had said, and begged him to conclude."

We need scarcely say of such a man that he was thoroughly tolerant. He belonged to the German Lutheran Church; but he at all times protected, even at personal risk, Roman Catholics in the prosecution of their religious observances, and once manfully interposed to prevent the maltreatment of a Jew. Yet; so far from being lukewarm for the truth, such was his zeal for Bible and missionary efforts that to aid them "he not only gathered all the funds he could among his parishioners; and exhausted his own slender funds, but sold off many articles of value in his household, including every utensil, except a single spoon."

In the latter part of his life he was so deeply interested in the movement for the abolition of slavery that he relinquished the use of coffee, the only slave-labour product which entered his dwelling.

In conversation with a visitor, Oberlin said that when he first came among his flock he found among them what he then considered "many superstitious notions respecting the proximity of the spiritual world, and of the appearance of various objects and phenomena in that world, which from time to time were seen by some of the people belonging to his flock." Oberlin reasoned and remonstrated, and even preached against this "superstition," but without producing the desired effect. Cases became more numerous, and the circumstances so striking, as even to stagger the scepticism of Oberlin himself. Instead of converting his parishioners he became himself converted. When asked what had worked such conviction, he replied "that he himself had had ocular and demonstrative experience respecting these important subjects." In fact, Oberlin had himself become a ghost-seer. Among other departed friends his wife frequently appeared to and conversed with him; and these visits continued for nine years after her death.

His unswerving conviction was that, like an attendant angel, she watched over him, held communion with him, and was visible to his sight; that she instructed him respecting the other world, and guarded him from danger in this; that, when he contemplated any new plan of utility, in regard to the results of which he was uncertain, she either encouraged his efforts or checked him in his project. He considered his interviews with her not as a thing to be doubted, but as obvious and certain—as certain as any event that is witnessed with the bodily eyes. When asked how he distinguished her appearance and her communications from dreams, he replied, "How do you distinguish one colour from another?"

Professor Barthe, who visited him in 1824, says that whilst he spoke of his intercourse with the spiritual world as familiarly

as of the daily visits of his parishioners, he was at the same time perfectly free from fanaticism, and eagerly alive to all the concerns of this earthly existence. He told his visitor that he might as well attempt to persuade him that that was not a table before them, as that he did not hold communication with the other world, and said "I give you credit for being honest when you assure me that you never saw anything of the kind; give me the same credit when I assure you that I do."

Oberlin stated that "he had a large pile of papers which he had written on this kind of spiritual phenomena, containing facts, with his own reflections upon them;* and added that after the fall of the Rossberg (a great mountain which buried several villages under its ruins), in 1806, apparitions were particularly frequent, and a considerable number of the inhabitants of the valley "had their spiritual eyesight opened," and perceived the apparitions of many of the sufferers.

With respect to the faculty of ghost-seeing, he said it depended on several circumstances, external and internal. People who live in the bustle and glare of the world seldom see them, whilst those who live in still, solitary, thinly inhabited places, like the mountainous districts of various countries, do. "So if I go into the forest by night, I see the phosphoric light of a piece of rotten wood; but if I go by day, I cannot see it; yet it is still there. Again, there must be a *rapport*. A tender mother is awakened by the faintest cry of her infant, whilst the maid slumbers on and never hears it; and if I thrust a needle amongst a parcel of wood-shavings, and hold a magnet over them, the needle is stirred, whilst the shavings are quite unmoved. There must be a particular aptitude; what it consists in I do not know, for of my people, many of whom are ghost-seers, some are weak and sickly, others vigorous and strong. There are several pieces of flint: I can see no difference in them; yet some have much iron in them that they easily become magnetic, others have little or none. So it is with the faculty of ghost-seeing. People may laugh as they will, but the thing is a fact, nevertheless.

He was a great admirer of the writings of Swedenborg, and in particular, of the treatise on "Heaven and Hell," affirming that he knew its revelations to be true from his own experience. He held with Swedenborg and other seers that everything on earth is but a copy of which the antitype exists in the spiritual world, and with his friend Stilling, "that the inhabitants of the invisible world can appear to us, and we to them, when God wills, and that we are apparitions to them, as they are to us." Like him, too, he was a devout believer in special providences. "From his youth he was accustomed, whenever his judgment was perplexed with any matter, to pray to God to give him some intimation of His will as to the course he should pursue." And

* This "large pile of papers" was submitted by Oberlin, some time before his death, to M. Mather, a French gentleman holding an important official position in the Department of Public Instruction. He found it to contain among other things, a narrative of a series of apparitions of Oberlin's deceased wife, and of his interviews with her. The manuscript was entitled *Journal des Apparitions et Instructions, par R  res*.

these intimations, whether of encouragement or warning, he religiously observed.

If Spiritualism be a "weakness," we are happy to share it with his great good man. May we, like him, practically embody it in ourselves, and not suffer it to remain as a dry dead fact only to the intellect.

Heinrich Zschokke was a man very different—in some points of character the opposite of Oberlin, but with a rare combination of varied and estimable qualities. A "self-made man," poet, novelist, schoolmaster, historian, statesman, philosopher, and public instructor. Adventurous, of restless activity, much given to thoughtful speculation, haunted for long years by the phantom of doubt, and tormented with the problems of existence, but attaining in the end to a serene rational Christian faith, his mental struggles and diversified outward and inward experiences peculiarly qualified him for the vocation to which he specially applied himself in his later years—that of a popular religious guide and teacher through the press. Toward the close of life, on looking back, he felt like Stilling, that the wondrous web of his past life had been not the work of his hand, "but of a mightier, an invisible." That he had been "borne along the torrent of events wherein (he says) I had no power but over my own will, hurled without any co-operation on my part into the wide fields of action, I was compelled to find within myself a strength of which I had not been conscious." He was instinctively a Spiritualist from his youth up, was well acquainted with the phenomena of rhabdomancy, which, he says, "presented me with a new phase of nature," and which was, moreover, of considerable use to him in his mining operations. He believed in spiritual impressions and presentiments from personal experience, especially as conveyed in dreams; but his most remarkable faculty was what he describes as "a singular kind of prophetic gift, which I called my inward sight, but which has ever been enigmatical to me." The following is his detailed account of it, which he gives, as "it may be an addition to our stock of soul experiences:"—

It is well known that the judgment we not seldom form at the first glance of persons hitherto unknown, is more correct than that which is the result of longer acquaintance. The first impression that through some instinct of the soul attracts or repels us with strangers, is afterwards weakened or destroyed by custom, or by different appearances. We speak in such cases of sympathies or antipathies, and perceive these effects frequently among children to whom experience in human character is wholly wanting. Others are incredulous on this point, and have recourse rather to the art of physiognomy. Now for my own case. It has happened to me sometimes on my first meeting with strangers, as I listened silently to their discourse, that their former life, with many trifling circumstances therewith connected, or frequently some particular scene in that life has passed quite involuntarily, and as it were dream-like, yet perfectly

distinct before me. During this time I usually feel so entirely absorbed in the contemplation of the stranger life, that at last I no longer see clearly the faces of the unknown wherein I undesignedly read, nor distinctly hear, the voices of the speakers, which before served in some measure as a commentary to the tones of their features. For a long time I held such visions as delusions of the senses, and the more so as they showed me even the dress and motions of the actors, the rooms, furniture, and other accessories. By way of jest, I once in a family circle at Kirchberg related the secret history of a seamstress who had just left the room and the house. I had never seen her before in my life, and the people were astonished and laughed, but were not to be persuaded that I did not previously know the relations of which I spoke, for what I had uttered was the literal truth; I on my part was no less astonished that my dream-pictures were confirmed by the reality. I became more attentive to the subject, and when propriety admitted it, I would relate to those whose life thus passed before me the subject of my vision, that I might thereby obtain confirmation or refutation of it. It was invariably ratified, not without consternation on their part. I myself had less confidence than any one in this mental jugglery. So often as I revealed my visionary gifts to any new person I regularly expected to hear the answer—"It was not so." I felt a secret shudder when my auditors replied that it was true, or when their astonishment betrayed my accuracy before they spoke. Instead of many I will mention one example, which pre-eminently astonished me. One fair day in the city of Waldshut, I entered an inn (the Vine) in company with two young student-foresters; we were tired with rambling through the woods. We supped with a numerous society at the *table d'hôte*, where the guests were making very merry with the peculiarities and eccentricities of the Swiss, with Mesmer's magnetism, Lavater's physiognomy, &c., &c. One of my companions, whose national pride was wounded by their mockery, begged me to make some reply, particularly to a handsome young man who sat opposite us, and who had allowed himself extraordinary licence. This man's former life was at that moment presented to my mind. I turned to him and asked whether he would answer me candidly if I related to him some of the most secret passages of his life, I knowing as little of him personally as he did of me? That would be going a little further, I thought, than Lavater did with his physiognomy. He promised, if I were correct in my information, to admit it frankly. I then related what my vision had shown me, and the whole company were now acquainted with the private history of the young merchant; his school years, his youthful errors, and lastly with a fault committed in reference to the strong box of his principal. I described to him the uninhabited room with whitewashed walls, where, to the right of the brown door, on a table, stood a black money-bag, &c., &c. A dead silence prevailed during the whole narration, which I alone occasionally interrupted by inquiring whether I spoke the truth? The startled young man confirmed every particular, and even, what I had scarcely expected, the last mentioned. Touched by his candour I shook hands with him over the table and said no more. He asked my name, which I gave him, and we remained together talking till past midnight. He is probably still living! I can well explain to myself how a person of lively imagination may form, as in a romance, a correct picture of the actions and passions of another person, of a certain character, under certain circumstances. But whence came these trifling accessories which *no wise concerned me*, and in relation to people for the most part indifferent to me, with whom I neither had, nor desired to have, any connexion? Or, was the whole matter a constantly recurring accident? Or, had my auditor, perhaps, when I related the particulars of his former life very different views to give of the whole, although in his first surprise, and misled by some resemblances, he had mistaken them for the same? And yet impelled by this very doubt I had several times given myself trouble to speak of the

* "What demon inspires you? Must I again believe in possession?" exclaimed the *spirituel* Johann von Riga, when in the first hour of our acquaintance I related his past life to him, with the avowed object of learning whether or no I deceived myself. We speculated long on the enigma, but even his penetration could not solve it.

most insignificant things which my waking dream had revealed to me. I shall not say another word on this singular gift of vision, of which I cannot say it was ever of the slightest service; it manifested itself rarely, quite independently of my will, and several times in reference to persons whom I cared little to look through. Neither am I the only person in possession of this power. On an excursion I once made with two of my sons, I met with an old Tyrolese who carried oranges and lemons about the country, in a house of public entertainment, in Lower Hanenstein, one of the passes of the Jura. He fixed his eyes on me for some time, then mingled in the conversation, and said that he knew me, although he knew me not, and went to relate what I had done and striven to do in former time, to the consternation of the country people present, and the great admiration of my children, who were diverted to find another person gifted like their father. How the old lemon merchant came by his knowledge he could explain neither to me nor to himself; he seemed, nevertheless, to value himself somewhat upon his mysterious wisdom.

Was this same faculty of "inward sight" possessed also by Lavater? According to Goethe it would seem so. He tells us that Lavater's insight into the characters of individuals "surpassed all conception," and he speaks of it as one of those gifts which "seem to have something of magic in it." However this may be, we have his authority for asserting that Lavater believed in special providences, especially in answer to prayer, and that he had "a perfect conviction that miracles can be wrought to-day as well as heretofore." He tells us, too, that "his (Lavater's) physiognomy rests on the conviction that the sensible corresponds throughout with the spiritual, and is not only an evidence of it, but, indeed, its representative;" and like Swedenborg and Spiritualists in general, he held that the future life was a continuation of the present, though under different conditions. A writer in the *Penny Cyclopædia* remarks that "one leading article of his faith was a belief in the sensible manifestation of supernatural powers. His disposition to give credence to the miraculous led him to believe the strange pretensions of many individuals, such as the power to exorcise devils, to perform cures by animal magnetism, &c."

There have probably been but few, if any, truly great men—men of large, well-developed capacity—the *pivotal* men by whose agency mainly the designs of Providence in the human world are carried into effect, but have had a consciousness of being prompted, aided, or as occasion required, restrained by invisible and yet most real intelligent powers. Socrates had his attendant dæmon, and Goethe, the greatest man of the eighteenth century—Carlyle's "Clear and Universal Man"—confesses that from what had often happened to him in life, he was "led to believe in the existence of dæmonic power." The nature of this was indeed to him inexplicable (as, in one sense, it will probably ever remain to all of us.) "The dæmonic," said he, "is that which cannot be

explained by reason or understanding ; it lies not in my nature. *but I am subject to it.*" We think it is Goethe who says that "the unconscious is alone complete." This is his explanation of the unconscious inspiration of poets :—"In poetry—especially in that which is *unconscious*, before which reason and understanding fall short, and which therefore produces effects so far surpassing all expectation,—there is always something of the dæmonic." In his conversations, related by Eckermann, he frequently expressed himself on this subject, as the following passages will show :—

"The nobler a man is," said Göethe, "so much the more is he under the influence of dæmons, and he must take heed and not let his guiding will counsel him to a wrong path. There was something of dæmonology in my connection with Schiller ; it might have happened earlier or later, without so much significance ; but that it should occur just at this time, when I had my Italian journey behind me, and Schiller began to be weary of his philosophical speculations, led to very important consequences for both. . . . I cannot but think that the *dæmons, dallying with men*, have placed among them single figures, so alluring that every one strives after them ; so great, that nobody can reach them. Raphael was one—he whose thoughts and acts were equally perfect ; some distinguished followers have come near, but no one has equalled him. Mozart represents the unattainable in music : Shakespeare in poetry. I know what you can say on the other side ; but I refer to the natural dowry, the inborn wealth. Even so none can stand by the side of Napoleon." . . . "Napoleon," said Eckermann, "seems to have been of the dæmonic sort." "He was so thoroughly," said Göethe, and in the highest degree, so that scarce any one is to be compared with him. Also our late Grand Duke was such a nature, full of unlimited power of action and unrest, so that his own dominion was too little for him, and the greatest would have been too little. Dæmonic beings of such sort the Greeks reckoned among their demi-gods. . . . He influenced men by his mere tranquil presence, without needing even to show himself good-humoured and friendly. All that I undertook by his advice succeeded ; so that when my own mind could not decide, I needed only to ask him what was to be done, when he gave me answer instinctively, and I could always be sure of happy results. He *will* have been enviable indeed, if he could have possessed himself of my ideas and my strivings ; for *when the dæmon forsook him, and only the human was left, he knew not how to work, and was much troubled at it.* In Byron, also, this element was probably very active, giving him such powers of attraction, especially with women. . . . I was drawn into the undertaking (*writing the Metamorphoses of Plants*) almost against my will, by some dæmoniacal influences which I could not resist."

As observed by Professor Spence, "it is worthy of remark, that this work, which Goethe was drawn into by some dæmoniacal influence which he could not resist, was so far in advance of his age, that the scientific world laughed at it. It was a projection of comprehensive principles in vegetable physiology, which lie at the very foundation of the science, and which, in connection with his vast generalizations in reference to the vertebral animal skeleton, laid the foundation of the science of Morphology."

An eloquent writer says of Goethe, that "the world was to him not a mere spectacle and dominion for the supernatural, but an actual manifestation of the substance of the supernatural itself in its way to new issues." As he himself says :—"The

understanding can never scale the loftiest heights. Man must rise through the highest reason to approach the Divinity which manifests itself in the primitive phenomena, physical, and moral, behind which it dwells and which proceeds from it. Divinity works in the living, and not in the dead, in the becoming and changing, and not in the *become* and *changed*."

Goethe too, seems to have recognized the power of prescience in dreams, probably regarding this as one form of manifestation of the dæmoniactal or spiritual element. In his autobiography he gives the following account of his grandfather. The examples he cites may doubtless be explained away by others, but it is evident that he, who surely had the best means of knowing, regarded the proofs that his grandfather really "possessed the gift of prophecy" as conclusive.

But what still increased the veneration with which we regarded this excellent old man was the conviction that he possessed the gift of prophecy, especially in regard to matters that concerned him and his. It is true that he confided the full knowledge and particulars of this faculty to no one except our grandmother; yet we children knew well enough that he was often informed, in remarkable dreams, of things that were to happen. For example, he assured his wife, at a time when he was still one of the youngest magistrates, that at the very next vacancy he would be appointed to a seat on the board of aldermen. And when, very soon after, one of the aldermen was struck with a fatal stroke of apoplexy, he ordered that, on the day when the choice was to be made by lot, the house should be arranged and everything prepared to receive the guests coming to congratulate him on his elevation. And, sure enough, it was for him that was drawn the golden ball which decides the choice of aldermen in Frankfort. The dream which foreshadowed to him this event he confided to his wife, as follows. He found himself in session with his colleagues, and everything was going on as usual, when an alderman (the same who afterwards died) descended from his seat, came to my grandfather, politely begged him to take his place, and then left the chamber. Something similar happened on occasion of the provost's death. It was usual in such case to make great haste to fill the vacancy, seeing that there was always ground to fear that the emperor, who used to nominate the provost, would some day or other re-assert his ancient privilege. On this particular occasion the sheriff received orders at midnight to call an extra session for next morning. When, in his rounds, this officer reached my grandfather's house, he begged for another bit of candle, to replace that which had just burned down in his lantern. "Give him a whole candle," said my grandfather to the women: "it is for me he is taking all this trouble." The event justified his words. He was actually chosen provost. And it is worthy of notice that, the person who drew in his stead having the third and last chance, the two silver balls were drawn first, and the golden one remained for him at the bottom of the bag. His dreams were matter-of-fact, simple, and without a trace of the fantastic or the superstitious, so far, at least, as they ever became known to us. I recollect, too, that when, as a boy, I used to look over his books and papers, I often found, mixed up with memoranda about gardening, such sentences as these:—"Last night . . . came to me and told me . . ."—the name and the circumstance being written in cipher. Or, again, it ran thus:—"Last night I saw . . ."—the rest in characters unintelligible to me. It is further remarkable, in this connection, that certain persons who had never possessed any extraordinary power sometimes acquired it, for the time being, when they remained near him; for example, the faculty of presentiment, by visible signs, in cases of sickness or death occurring at the time, but at a distance. Yet none either of his children or of his grandchildren inherited this peculiarity."

T. S.

A "DEMONIACAL EPIDEMIC."

UNDER the above heading we find in the *Revue Spirite* the following letter, addressed to the President of a Society of Spiritualists by Captain B——, a member of the Society:—

"Annecy, March 7, 1862.

"Mons. le President—Thinking I might render myself useful to the society, I have the honour of sending you a pamphlet that has been handed to me by my friend, Dr. Caille, who has been charged by the minister to follow up the inquiries made by M. Constant, Inspector of Lunatic Asylums, on the numerous cases of demonomania observed in the Commune of Morzine, District of Thonon, High Savoy. This unhappy population is still under the influence of obsession, and in spite of the exorcisms and medical treatment, and the measures taken by the authorities having charge of the hospital of the department, the cases, though somewhat diminished, have not ceased; the evil still exists; that is to say, is only in abeyance. The *curé*, wishing to exorcise the unhappy ones, mostly children, had them taken to the church by powerful men, but no sooner had he pronounced a few Latin words than a frightful scene took place—the children uttering fearful cries, leaping furiously, and falling into convulsions. Such was the excitement that it was necessary to send for the *gensd'armes* and infantry to keep order.

"I have not been able to procure all the information I could wish, but it seems to me these things are serious enough for your examination. Dr. Arthaud, of Lyons, has read the report of the Medical Society of this city, which report is printed in the *Medical Gazette* of Lyons, which you can procure from your correspondent. We have in the hospital of this city two women of Morzine who are under treatment. Dr. Caille concludes it is an epidemic nervous affection that defies all medical treatment and exorcism, and the isolation of the patient is alone productive of a beneficial result.

"All the unhappy obsessed pronounce in their cries ordinary words; they make prodigious leaps over tables, and climb trees to their very tops, sometimes prophesying.

"If these things presented themselves in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in the convents, it is not less true that in our day they offer to us a subject of study. It is now five years since the first case was observed.

"I have the honour to send you all the documents and information I have been enabled to procure.—Yours, &c.,—B."

Following this letter are two spiritual communications to the circle at Paris, through the mediumship of Mesdames Castel and D'Anville, which we subjoin:—

"It is not to the physicians, but to the magnetizers—the Spiritualists and the spirits—that you must send to disperse the legion of bad spirits wandering on your planet. For a long time these unhappy people, tainted by their impure contact, have suffered both in body and morals. Where is the remedy, ask you? Good will come of evil; for man, frightened by these manifestations, will welcome with transport the good spirits who succeed them as the day succeeds the night. The initiation of this impure crowd of spirits has opened eyes that were firmly closed, and the disorders and acts of madness are but the prelude of the initiation of all who wish to participate in the great spiritual light. Exclaim not against this as a cruel manifestation. Everything has its purpose, and suffering brings forth good fruit, as the storm destroys the harvest in one country, while it fertilizes another.

"The cases of demonomania taking place at the present time at Savoy, have appeared in other countries in Europe, particularly in Germany, but principally in the East. The seeming anomalies are more characteristic than you think; in effect, it reveals to the attentive observer a situation analogous to those manifestations in the last years of Paganism. No one forgets that when Christ, our well-beloved master, was incarnated in Judea, that country was overrun by legions of bad spirits, who had taken possession, as at the present day, of the classes of society most ignorant, seizing on the feeblest and least informed; in a word, of the classes having the care of cattle and labouring in the fields. Do you not perceive a very great analogy between the manifestations of the present and other days? Here is a profound teaching, and you must conclude that the time predicated approaches nearer and nearer, when the Son of Man shall return to chase away this new crowd of impure spirits; when he will strike them to the earth and renew the Christian faith, giving his high and divine sanction to the consoling revelations and the regenerating teachings of Spiritualism.

"But to return to these actual cases of demonomania. It is necessary to recall to the learned that the physicians of the age of Augustus followed the prescriptions of Hippocrates in treating the unhappy possessed, but all their science was shattered before this unknown power; also at the present day your inspectors of epidemics, your most distinguished doctors of Savoy, your wise doctors of a pure materialism, are stranded before this malady, entirely mortal; this epidemic, entirely spiritual. But what imports it, my friends, to you, whom grace has newly touched? You know well that all these evils are curable to those who have faith. Hope, then, and wait with confidence the coming of Him who has already redeemed humanity. The hour approaches."

The article concludes with some remarks by M. Kardec, editor of the *Revue*, from which we make the following extracts:—

“From what has preceded, we are inclined to believe these effects are not from any affection, but from an occult influence, and we have reason to believe that we have had numerous identical cases, and that the teachings of Spiritualism are able to meet all such cases of obsession. It has been demonstrated by experience that malevolent spirits move both the mind and body with which they identify themselves, and which they use as if it were their own, provoking ridiculous cries, acts, and disordered movements, which have all the appearance of madness and monomania. In effect, it is a sort of madness, and we may give this name to all the states where the spirit acts not freely. In this point of view, drunkenness is accidental madness.

“It is necessary, then, to distinguish between madness pathological and madness obsessional. The first is produced by disorder in the organs and manifestations of thought. Observe, in this state the spirit is not mad; it holds possession of all its faculties; but the instrument through which it manifests itself being disordered, the thought, or expression of thought, is incoherent.

“The obsessed madness is not an organic injury. It is the spirit itself that is affected by its subjection to a strange spirit, who has mastery and dominion. In the first place, it is necessary to heal the sick organs; in the second, it is sufficient to deliver the sick spirit from its impure keeper, in order to render it free. The cases are similar, and are often taken for genuine madness, which are but obsession, for which it is necessary to employ moral means, not medicines. By physical treatment and by contact with true madmen, we are enabled to tell the true madness, and where it does not exist.

“Spiritualism has opened a new horizon to all the sciences, bringing the clearest light on a subject formerly so obscure—mental maladies—and showing the cause which, until our day, has not been taken into account—the real cause, proved by experience, of which we have so lately learned the truth.

“These cases in Savoy appeal to the attention, hastening, probably, the time of our recognition of the action of the invisible world in the phenomena of Nature. The time has come, and Science possesses the key to many of these mysteries, and seeks to throw down the most formidable barrier that opposes its progress—*Materialism*, which narrows the circle of observation, in place of enlarging it.”*

* M. Kardec refers for further instances of a similar kind to this in Savoy, and for explanation, to a following article, and to his *Book of Mediums* (*Le Livre des Mediums*). See also Wilkinson's *Revival*, Madden's *Phantasmata*, and *The Morning Watch*.

A LESSON IN TOLERATION.

MR. HORACE SEAVER, editor of the *Boston Investigator*, has recently attended and participated in the Boston Spiritual Conferences. Some bigoted reader of his paper calls him to account. Mr. Seaver's reply savours of the right spirit, and may be profitably read by Spiritualists as well as Infidels:—

"A TEXT AND COMMENT."

"SPIRITUALISM.—Mr. Editor—I understand that you are in the habit of talking in spiritual meetings, and as changes are the order of the day, I thought I would inquire of you if the wind sets in that quarter now? No offence is intended.

"Qui?"

"And no offence is taken; nor has there been any "change" in the wind, and precious little in the pocket! but as we like to attend liberal meetings of all kinds, we sometimes visit the Spiritualists, who are doing considerable (a great deal more than some people who oppose them) to promote free thought and free speech, and therefore should be encouraged in this particular at least, the rest of their doctrine to the contrary notwithstanding. Don't our quizzing friend "Qui" believe in giving credit to whom it is due? For our part, we rather incline that way; and further, as we are getting tired of wholesale and everlasting opposition to everybody who does not entirely agree with us, we are ready and willing to go half way to meet any parties, no matter who they are, and labour with them on common ground so long as they acknowledge our equality of rights. We do not wish to be bigoted ourselves, nor to support bigotry in others, nor do we imagine that we possess all the liberality that there is in the world. Others exhibit it as well as infidels, and as it is very desirable, let who will maintain it, we feel like uniting with its friends, whoever they are. We may never think alike on all subjects, but we shall not be allowed any mental freedom at all, unless we put down that miserable bigotry which condemns for an honest difference of opinion. Here is common ground on which we can all assemble, and stand shoulder to shoulder in the maintenance of a common cause."

SPIRITUALISM ON THE CONTINENT.

WE learn from a letter by A. W. FENNO, in the *Herald of Progress*, that "a Society of Spiritualists has been organized at Vienna, under the auspices of the French society. An edition of 10,000 of Kardec's work on Spiritualism has been exhausted; it has also been translated into German, Russian, and Polish. Dr. Le Grand, Vice-Consul of France, has written a letter upon Spiritualism."

"THE FRIENDS OF GOD."—No. II.

NICOLAS OF BASLE, AND THE BRETHREN OF GRUENEN-WOERTH.

BEFORE resuming our narrative of the mysterious "layman of the Oberland," we must extract from Miss Winckworth's volume her brief mention of two remarkable women associated in the labours of the "Friends of God," sincerely wishing that pages written by a woman had chronicled at greater length the spiritual experiences and religious influence of the sisters in the Spirit of Tauler and his compeers. These women were Marguretha Ebner, a nun at the convent of Maria Medingen, in the diocese of Augsburg. Her sister Christina was abbess of the convent of Engenthal, near Nuremberg. Both were distinguished by their mental endowments and their spiritual visions as well as by their earnest piety, and were evidently held in great respect by Tauler, Suso, Henry of Nördlingen, and others of "The Friends of God." They seem to have taken a very decided position amidst the ecclesiastical commotions of their age. Christina in one of her trances sees the Romish Church in the likeness of a magnificent cathedral, the doors of which are closed by reason of the interdict. The singing of priests within is heard; a crowd of people are standing round, but dare not enter. Suddenly a man in the garb of a preaching friar comes up to the nun, and tells her that he will give her words wherewith to console the forsaken multitude, and this man is Christ.

Tauler occasionally visited both these nuns, and was in correspondence with Marguretha, whom he urges to write down her visions respecting the state of Christendom, and "The Friends of God." For Tauler the two sisters appear to have had a deep veneration, constantly calling him "Our dear Father Tauler." Christina is taught in one of her revelations, that he is "the holiest of God's children now living on earth," that "the spirit of God breathes through him, as sweet music through a lute." Margaret speaks, too, of the joy that she has had in the presence of this great "Friend of God," and observes how hard it has been to part with him. Towards Henry of Nördlingen (a priest from Constance) she appears to have stood rather in the relation of a wise Christian friend and counsellor, than in that of a spiritual child."

To return now to Nicolas of Basle. We learn that "the most important of the MSS. examined by Professor Schmidt is a large folio volume, only recently discovered in the archives of Strasburg, and formerly belonging to the Convent of the Knights of St. John in that city. It is called a *Briefbuch* (Book of Letters),

and is for the most part a collection of letters and papers left by Rulman Merswin, the founder of the convent. This Rulman Merswin was a friend of Tauler (who was for some time his confessor), and, in the latter part of his life, of the layman Nicolas, by whose advice he built a home for the Brethren of St. John, on an island at Strasburg called the Gruenen-Woerth (green meadow), and with whom he was in constant correspondence up to the time of his death, 1382. Several portions of this extremely curious *Briefbuch* were carefully copied into the archives of the convent, but the codex itself did not belong to the public archives of the house, being kept secret from all but a few. The documents of which it consists, were arranged, and most of them copied out by Nicolas von Laufen who (according to a few notices of himself which he has inserted at the close of the *Briefbuch*) seems to have accompanied Rulman Merswin as his secretary on taking possession of the newly-built Greunen-Woerth in 1366, and a few years later to have become a priest of the order of St. John. The codex contains, among other less important matter, a MS., called "The Book of the Five Men," being an account of Nicolas (of Basle) and his four intimate companions, in the handwriting of Nicolas himself; twenty-two of his letters, apparently copied by Nicolas von Laufen, and the original MS. of Rulman Merswin's account of the first four years of his religious history in his own handwriting. Thus, after a lapse of five hundred years, we are able to learn more about this extraordinary half-mythical "Friend of God in the Oberland," than his very contemporaries knew. Born of a good family at Basle, possessed of wealth and great mental power, he nevertheless was very unhappy, and filled with an increasing consciousness of his sinfulness and ignorance of Divine things. For years he struggled with his intellectual difficulties—being a layman, and with the temptations of the world, until he determined to renounce all things for God, and having been taught in God's own school, as we have seen in his discourse with Tauler, he gained internal peace and became the head of a society of "Friends of God," who lived with him secluded from the world, and formed the secret centre of a wide circle of religious activity.

Rulman Merswin, from the accounts given of him in the MS. of the Gruenen-Woerth Convent, was originally, it appears, a wealthy merchant and money-changer, who "had always conducted his business with great fear of God before his eyes, and was of a very merry and pleasant temper, so that many esteemed and loved him, and sought his society, which was to himself also very agreeable in those days." Having lost his first wife, and having no child either by her or by his second wife, "the daughter of a pious knight," at forty years of age, with her full consent,

she "being an honourable and pious Christian woman," he gave up his business and devoted his entire life to the service of God.

According to the spirit of the age, Rulman, at the commencement of his religious career, "chastised his body with very sore and manifold exercises, so that he more than once became so weak that he thought he should die," but Tauler becoming at this time his confessor, somewhat checked this excessive and dangerous zeal. "During this first year," writes Rulman in his autobiography, "our Lord was pleased to give me a true discernment of many things, so that whenever I commended any matter with great earnestness to God, He gave me to perceive what I must do, and leave undone. Moreover, our Lord also suffered me to be oftentimes tormented with grievous and horrible temptations both by day and night; but it was given to me, by the grace of God, to receive them with humble and cheerful submission. . . . And when God saw that it was the proper time, He came to my help with His merciful grace. Now, during the second and third years, (this last was the Jubilee, when all men went on pilgrimage to Rome) did God work many great and supernatural works with me, a poor sinner, through great sorrow and spiritual assaults, and withal unspeakable temptations, of which it were a sin to write. But one which I may write is, that God suffered me to be assailed with unbelief; to wit, that the devil put it into my head to ask, 'How may it be that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit may consist in one nature?' And this unbelief remained upon me for a long space, and all that time I thought nothing else but that I must certainly burn for ever in hell; and yet I felt within myself that nevertheless my will was set to love God. And after a good while, I grew so infirm through this continual pain that it was all I could do, when Assumption Day came, to venture to go and sit down to hear a sermon. And as I put my hat before my eyes I fell into a swoon from my weakness; and while I was thus in a trance, there appeared unto me a great stone, wherein were carved the likeness of three men's countenances. . . . And it was as though a voice said to me, 'Now mayest thou well believe, since thou hast seen how in one stone may be three persons, and yet it is one stone, and the three persons have the nature of one rock.' And hereupon I came to myself, and was seized with fear when I found myself sitting among the crowd. So I rose up and walked out into the aisle, and found that my faith had been enlightened, insomuch that I never again was assailed with unbelief; but the other terrible temptation I had to endure for two years longer, insomuch that I often thought I knew the pains of hell. And in all those two years God would not suffer me to speak of my pain to any man, however great it might be. I

must endure to the end alone, that I might have no help or consolation. But in the fourth year, my Lord and God showed his great mercy upon me, and looked upon my affliction, and came to my help with such great and superhuman joy, that in that moment I forgot all my woe and pain that ever I had suffered, and became also in all my natural powers quite strong and lively as though I had never known what sickness was. And he gave me, moreover, much gracious discernment, so that, when I looked narrowly at a man, I could oftentimes perceive pretty well how it stood with him inwardly. And I was further constrained, however unwilling, to write a little book for the benefit of my fellow Christians."

"From a comparison of dates," Miss Winckworth observes "that this 'little book' must be 'The Book of Nine Rocks.'" It contains, we are told, under the form of allegorical visions, a detailed account of the mental conflicts through which Rulman had passed, most probably indeed is a chronicle of the identical visions by which he had been instructed by the Spirit during his years of initiation, instruction, through parabolic pictures, being a well-known "spiritual manifestation," whether in the fourteenth or nineteenth century.* The "little book" is divided into two parts, the first containing together with these visions, a description of the terrible condition of sin and suffering under which the Christendom of his age groaned. The second part is a description of nine books, "symbolizing nine stages in the progress of the soul towards a higher life; each more difficult of ascent, and more glorious than the preceding. From the summit he obtains a momentary glimpse into the glory of Deity; then, looking back to earth, sees two men, the one bright and shining as an angel, the other black as Satan. The latter was one who having reached the summit of the Nine Rocks, had desired to be somewhat for himself, and had thereupon fallen step by step back into the abyss; the former, one who having gazed at the Godhead, filled with love and compassion, descended voluntarily to save his brethren from their sins."

"In this fourth year," observes Rulman, "the three powers of Faith, Love, and Hope, were greatly strengthened in me. Moreover, nothing in time or eternity could give me content but God himself; but when He came to my soul, I knew not whether I were in time or eternity. And in my heart I felt a great yearning, and wished it were the will of God that I might go to the heathen, and tell them of the Christian faith. And I would gladly have suffered death and martyrdom in honour of our

* Vide Vol. II., No. 16, of *Spiritual Magazine*, containing in the article entitled, "Sensorial Vision," numerous instances of similar pictorial parabolic instruction, received at the present day.

Lord's sufferings and death. But of all this I was not permitted to speak a word to any, until there came a time when God gave a man in the Oberland to understand that he should come down to me. And when he came, God gave me to tell him of all these things. . . . And I told him of all my hidden life in these four years. Then said he to me: 'Behold, dear friend, here is a book in which stand written, the first five years of my life in God, give me the history of thy first four years in exchange for it.' . . . And to this Rulman consents, having first, however, stipulated that no one during his lifetime should know of his experiences. "Notwithstanding," he continues, "all these gifts and enlightenments, that God bestowed on me in this fourth year, there was yet a secret spot in my soul, the which was altogether unknown to myself. And it was, that, when I looked upon my fellow men, I esteemed them as they were in this present time, and stood before God in their sins; and this was a hidden spot, for I ought through grace to have regarded them, not as they now were, but as they might well become." And as if the more fully to impress this truth upon him, the external objects around him were made use of by the Spirit to impressively enunciate it to him in a manner familiar to the "mystics" of the present age as well as of his own, namely, by an *inward voice*. "Observing a waste piece of ground cumbered with rubbish, and giving it as his judgment that it might be reclaimed, and made a garden of, an inward voice reveals his sin to him, and rebukes him, saying: 'O thou poor miserable creature! how strange art thou! How darest thou, then, to esteem according to what he now is, thy fellow man, who is made in the image of God, and whom Christ has made his brother in his human nature, and not rather deem that God may make of him a comely and excellent garden wherein He himself may dwell.'" It was revealed to Rulman that he should no longer be so greatly exercised by the temptations from which he had hitherto suffered, "but that his afflictions should henceforth be to behold how the sheep were wandering abroad among the proud, unclean, wolves."

Through his wealth, through his power of writing, and through active benevolence does Rulman appear to have sought unceasingly to benefit his fellow Christians. His name occurs as the manager of a hospital; he is mentioned as Provost of the Convent of St. Argobast; and in the sixteenth century a house of Beguins in Strasburg still bore his name. "But he is best known," says Miss Winckworth, "as the founder of the convent belonging to the Knights of St. John, at Strasburg." After long deliberation with his friend, "the man from the Oberland," who of course is Nicolas of Basle, and with some pecuniary assistance from him he bought and repaired the half-

ruined convent of Gruenen-Woerth, which he then endowed and made over to the Order of St. John, on condition that its worldly affairs should be managed by three lay trustees, and that it should be a refuge for any good men, whether priests or laymen, rich or poor, who might wish to retire there for their spiritual benefit. His principal motive seems indeed to have been the desire to provide a permanent asylum for pious persons like himself, whose free opinions might at any moment bring them into trouble. He entered on possession of it in 1366, and continued to live there till his death, in July, 1382, having, however, two years before, built himself a solitary cell close to the church.

The little company lived together on equal terms. The priests among them seem to have had no peculiar vocation, except that of celebrating mass; the laymen never took part in the administration of the sacraments, but in all other respects there was no distinction between them. As all stood in a direct and individual relation to God, they required no priestly mediation; nay, the priests themselves submitted to the layman, their friend in the Oberland, Nicolas (of Basle), because they regarded him as the most enlightened of the "Friends of God." "Not counsel from men ought we to seek after," once wrote Nicolas, "but that which proceeds from the Holy Spirit; and so long as we have it from that source it is indifferent whether it flows to us through priest or layman." In their religious services and fasts they did not strictly observe stated hours, for they regarded external observances as unimportant in themselves, and only excellent as a means of improvement or a sign of obedience. Thus, whilst they admitted ascetic exercises and painful penances to be useful in the commencement of a religious life in order to mortify the sensual inclinations, they declared them to be afterwards a matter of indifference, nay, sometimes positively contrary to the Divine will. Neither do these "Friends of God," appear to have renounced all control over their property, but merely to have thrown what they regarded as superfluous into a common stock, which was applied to the building of their house and church, to purposes of charity, to defray the expenses of their missionary journeys, &c. This common stock was managed by their trustworthy steward, Ruprecht, who was the chief, if not sole medium of communication between Nicolas and his Strasburg friends. From their seclusion, however, they kept a watchful eye upon all that was passing in the world around them, went out to those whom there seemed a prospect of winning over, and exercised no inconsiderable influence upon those who put themselves under their spiritual guidance.

Messengers from Nicolas seem to have been perpetually

travelling about, who brought him letters from the "Friends of God" not only with those in his immediate neighbourhood, but on the Rhine, in Lorraine, in Italy, and in Hungary. Nicolas took extraordinary precautions to remain undiscovered, and with such success, that, after Rulman's death, the brethren at the Grüenen-Woerth, who had previously received many letters from him, were never able to discover his retreat. When those with whom he corresponded desired to enter into personal communication with him, he usually refused it, simply saying that it could not be. He writes that for twenty years he had only been able to reveal himself to one person. Meanwhile he was actively busied with his pen, and it is through the various MSS. communicated by him to various individuals or religious communities that after the lapse of centuries he has been identified and his vast labours traced. In 1367 Nicolas and certain of his companions who had until then, it is surmised, dwelt in Basel, determined on retiring into utter seclusion, no doubt in order to carry on their work unwatched and undisturbed. We are told that in accordance with a dream which commanded them to take their black dog as a guide, they fixed on a site high up on a mountain far away from any human habitation. After a year's delay in obtaining the permission of the Duke of Austria, in whose dominions the site fixed upon lay, they commenced building their house on an ample scale for the healthful accommodation of themselves, and for the reception of guests, but, owing to political disturbances, seven years it remained at a standstill.

Nicolas appears to have been much "exercised in mind" regarding the political and ecclesiastical feuds of the Papal Court, and constantly predicted in his letters that they must bring down still heavier judgments from God's hand than even those which already had visited the world. In 1376 when Gregory XI. returned to Rome, Nicolas felt drawn to visit him and endeavour, by personal influence, to bring about, if possible, unity in the afflicted Church. At seventy years of age, and when but recently recovered from a severe attack of illness, Nicolas accompanied by a trusty "Friend of God" set forth therefore on his mission to Rome.

Rulman Merswin, in his *Briefbuch*, gives a detailed account of this remarkable expedition, and having narrated the comfortable arrival of the two "Friends" in Rome says "so they came into the presence of Pope Gregory, and the Jurist (Nicolas's companion) spoke to him in Latin, and said, among much other discourse: 'Holy Father, there be many grievous and heinous crimes wrought throughout Christendom by all degrees of men, whereby God's anger is greatly provoked; thou oughtest to consider how to put an end to these evils.' But he answered, 'I

have no power to amend matters.' Then they told him his own secret faults, which had been revealed to them of God by certain evident tokens, and said, 'Holy Father, know of a truth, that if thou dost not put away evil ways, thou shalt die within a year,' as also came to pass. When the Pope heard these words of rebuke he was enraged beyond measure; but they answered and said: 'Holy Father, take us captive, and if we cannot give you evident tokens, then kill us, and do what you will with us.' And when they declared to him these tokens, he rose up from his throne and embraced them and kissed them on the mouth, and said to the layman, 'Let us talk together in Italian, since thou canst not speak Latin.' And they had much and loving discourse together. And afterwards the Pope prayed the two 'Friends of God' that they should stay with him in Rome, and he offered to provide them all things needful, and also to follow their counsel. But they answered: 'Holy Father, suffer us to return home, and we will be at all times obedient to come if you send for us. For we seek no earthly gain, nor have we come hither for the sake of such; we seek only God's glory, and the welfare of Christendom above all the perishable gifts of this present time.' Then he inquired of them where their home might be; and when they said 'We have long dwelt in such a town,' he marvelled that such 'Friends of God' should dwell among the common people. Thereupon they told him all that had happened, and how they had been hindered in their building. Then the Pope would have given them a bishopric and other revenues and grants, but they would not have them. But the Pope gave them letters recommending their cause to the Bishop and Clergy of their diocese. Now when these two dear 'Friends of God' had settled their affairs with the Pope, and desired to depart from Rome, their host would not suffer them to pay for anything they had had in his house, and, moreover, gave the layman a good ambling horse instead of the heavy carriage in which he had come, saying that a soft-paced horse would be much easier for him to ride over the high mountains than the carriage, seeing that he was old and weakly. Now, afterwards the Pope was unmindful of God's message, and obeyed it not, and died that same year as they had prophesied—to wit, about the fourth week in Lent, 1378."

Upon their return home, all things, as if obeying the Divine command, conspired for the completion of their house and the erection of their church, and before long the "little band were at length able to settle down in the house *they had chosen*," says Miss Winckworth; but was it not rather which *God* had chosen for them and completed in His own time after needful trial of the faith of His servants. As if, however, to show that the resting-

place even for the servants of God is not for long on any spot of earth, but that it is with them in all ages as with the Children of Israel in the desert, who must be ready to go onward in their journeys "when the cloud is taken up from over the tabernacle," these trusty "Friends of God" were permitted but a few years of enjoyment in their retreat.

In the very year of Nicolas's visit to the Pope, he and many of "the Friends" appear to have been filled with sad forebodings regarding approaching calamities, and to have "foreseen the painful collision that was impending between their deep reverence for the outward authority of the church and the inward authority of the indwelling light." Neither can they have been without prevision of the martyr's fate, which appears to have been awarded to all those of whose end any traces can be gathered.

Miss Winckworth writes—"In the following year the great schism that had been dimly foretold broke out, and for forty years the church was divided between two heads; Urban VI. was elected at Rome, under the influence of terror at the violence of the insurgent mob; and soon after, in subservience to the French party, Clement VII. at Fondi, who immediately hastened to Avignon. When these tidings reached the "Friends of God," it seemed to them that the time was come when the threatened judgments of God were about to burst over the world." Although preserving their secret mode of operation, their activity was redoubled. "In 1379, Nicolas (as he relates in a letter to Henry von Wolfach), with seven other brethren, met in some wild place high up among the mountains, near a chapel hewn out in a rock, close to which a priest dwelt with two young brethren in a little hermitage. Four out of the seven were laymen, the other three ordained priests. Nicolas, whether from humility or not, speaks of himself as one of the least among them. From his letter, it would seem that the chief purpose of this meeting was united prayer to God, to avert the 'dreadful storm' that was menacing the Christian world, that there might be space left for amendment. A week was devoted to these supplications; every afternoon the brethren went out into the forest and sate down 'beside a fair brook,' to converse upon the matters on which they had come hither. At length, on the last day, while thus assembled, a storm of wind came on, followed by a thick darkness, which they took for a work of the evil spirits. After the storm had lasted an hour, there came a pleasant light, and the sweet voice of an invisible angel announced to them that God had heard their prayer, and stayed His chastisements for a year; but when this was ended, they should entreat Him no more, for the Father would no longer delay to take vengeance on the despisers of His

Son. After this it appears from "hints" in the letters of Nicolas, that they interpreted the promise of the angel to mean that they were to continue a year longer in concealment, and then issue forth upon their mission into the world. One thing, however, appears to be clearly stated, and this is, that a second personal remonstrance with the Pope was to be essayed, and the task to be entrusted to Nicolas. It does not appear, however, that this plan was put into execution. Nevertheless the time was approaching when Nicolas felt himself inspired to perform another and yet more sacred task, possibly that for which he and his companions had been long preparing, and this was to go forth preaching amongst the people. "Already, in June, 1379, he calls upon the Strasburg master to warn the people in his sermons, and hold up before them the testimonies of Scripture concerning their duties in the crisis."

As the end of the year of waiting approached, another meeting of the "Friends of God" was appointed. It is recorded in the narrative given by Nicolas to Rulman Merswin that he with twelve other "Friends of God" were warned by dreams, at Christmas, 1379, to assemble together on the following Holy Thursday at the former place of meeting. Amongst the Friends thus summoned were one from the country of "the Lords of Meiglon," probably Milan, one from Genoa, and two from Hungary. On the 22nd of March they met at the little chapel in the mountain, and after receiving the sacrament on the morning of Good Friday, betook themselves to the "fair stream."

Miss Wjckworth remarks that "what passed during these conferences is only related in the form of marvellous visions and fantastic occurrences." Possibly, it might have been more correct to say, that *marvellous visions occurred*, and much that possessed the *fantastic* character of symbolism.

Again, at this second assembly of the "Friends of God," and as at a later period in the case of the spiritual manifestations which accompanied the meeting of the "Philadelphian Society" or "Angelic Brethren" in England in 1651, storms, darkness, and the infestation of evil spirits preceded the glory—darkness and terror giving way to celestial light and consolation. We are told that a bright light surrounded the place where the Friends of God were assembled, and that an invisible speaker informed them that the impending plagues should be stayed for three years longer, on condition that the directions contained in a letter which fell in their midst, apparently from heaven, should be obeyed. The commands contained in this miraculous document were that the "Friends" should withdraw themselves from their ordinary communications with the world, except in the case of those who should desire their counsel; that they should receive the

sacrament three times a week, and that after three years they should receive further directions. Having declared their willingness to obey these commands, the same voice ordered that a fire be lighted and that the mysterious letter be thrown into it, when, instead of burning, it rose up in the fire, whilst a flash of lightning met the flame and caught up flame and letter to heaven; after which the brethren departed to their homes.

The visions and certain other experiences of the brethren, Miss Winckworth endeavours to regard as allegorical, "but such an occurrence as a letter falling from heaven," she observes, presents much greater difficulties. It is possible she, however, still thinks "that Nicolas may have intended the whole story rather as an allegory than as a matter of fact; if he regarded it in the latter light, it must have been the result either of a terribly over-strained imagination, or of fraud on the part of some unknown person. But to suppose that a man of so much simple holiness and practical wisdom as Nicolas appears to us, should have taken part in juggling tricks of such dreadful impiety in order to persuade his associates that the course he judged best was prescribed to them by Heaven, is, I confess, a larger demand upon my powers of credence than they are able to meet."

To those, however, who believe, or rather know, both from knowledge of what is occurring at the present day, and from careful study of the records of spiritual manifestation belonging to all ages, that miracles did not cease with the early Christian Church, but have existed down to our own time wherever a sufficient and child-like faith in the power of the Almighty has been preserved, this remarkable occurrence may assume a less suspicious and impossible character. The accompanying circumstance of the flash of lightning also will carry with it to such minds no fresh cause of distrust towards the eye-witness. Odylic light, electricity, or whatsoever it may be termed, has ever been an attendant upon spiritual manifestation, whether in Pagan, Jewish, or Early Christian or modern ages, and have we not the testimony of the Psalmist, who tells us that God "makes His angels spirits, and His ministers a flaming fire?"

In 1383, the three years prescribed for preparation for their external mission having expired, and the political and ecclesiastical tempest sweeping with ever increasing violence over Europe, Nicolas and the Brethren, appear from the far and scattered traces of them already discovered, to have set forth upon their labours, preaching the emancipating and vitalizing powers of the Spirit until at length the time arrived when the sacred seal of martyrdom was placed upon their God-commissioned career.

All that is actually known respecting "The Friends of God" subsequent to 1383 is, that in 1393, a certain Martin Von Mayence,

a Benedictine monk of Reichenau, in the diocese of Constance, who is called in the acts of his trial a disciple of Nicolas of Basle, and a "Friend of God," was burnt at Cologne, after the same fate had befallen some other "Friends of God," a short time before at Heidelberg. Active researches were made after Nicolas, but as he had concealed himself from his friends, for a long time he was able to elude the efforts of his persecutors. At length, on a journey which he had undertaken into France, in order to diffuse his doctrine, accompanied by two of his disciples, James and John, the latter most likely the converted Jew, who always appears as his bosom friend, he fell into the hands of the inquisitors at Vienne, in the diocese of Poitiers. He was brought to trial, and persisted firmly and publicly in his heresies, the most audacious of which seems to have been that he pretended to "know that he was in Christ, and Christ in him." He was therefore delivered over to the secular powers, and perished in the flames, together with his two disciples, who refused to be parted from him. Nicolas appears to have been about ninety years of age when he thus gloriously suffered martyrdom. After this time all traces of the "Friends of God" appear to be lost.

That which is of Spirit cannot however perish, although for a time apparently it may die and be buried. Still, obeying an eternal law, revive it must, rise again, and stand once more active amongst men. The rich grain of the vast spiritual harvest of the fourteenth century may possibly have lain dormant its *three days*, that is to say, its *three hundred years*, in its sepulchre, (for we are told that years are as days in the reckoning of God); but assuredly in the seventeenth century once more in the world appeared a wonderful body of men and women calling themselves "Friends" and "the Children of Light," a people inspired by a most Holy Spirit, who, accompanied by signs of the divine indwelling presence and miraculous power, similar in character to the "Friends" of the fourteenth century, preached unwearyingly, laboured undauntedly, and suffered martyrdom unflinchingly for the self-same doctrine—the doctrine of the indwelling Spirit and its all-quickenings, all-emancipating power.

The great heresy, we are told, of Nicolas of Basle, "*was that he pretended to know that he was in Christ, and Christ was in him.*"

How stood it with a certain martyr amongst the Friends of this later era?

James Naylor was a tender-hearted, simple, pious soul, untaught by the schools, wondrously inspired by the Holy Ghost, and much misunderstood by man. He, by the orthodox upholders of the religious creed of those days, was accused of blasphemy. Ultimately he suffered upon this charge a terrible

martyrdom, not the less fearful and fatal because it caused a death more lingering than that of the aged Nicolas of Basle.

What words of his have also come down to us? Let us hear them as preserved in the report of his examination before one of the local magistrates of his day.

"Justice Pearson.—'Is Christ in thee?'

"James Naylor.—'I witness Him in me; and if I should deny Him before men, He would deny me before my Father which is in Heaven.'

"Justice Pearson.—'Spiritually you mean?'

"James Naylor.—'Yea, spiritually.'

"Justice Pearson.—'Is Christ in thee as man?'

"James Naylor.—'Christ filleth all places, and is not divided; separate God and man, and he is no more Christ.'"

Truly the Divine utterance cannot be stifled even by the weight of centuries; the grave of centuries must yawn and give it forth again and again, quickened with an eternal vitality, that of the ever-returning Spirit of incarnated Christ Jesus.

A. M. H. W.

GENERAL BASIS OF THE SOCIETY OF "THE LYCEUM CHURCH OF SPIRITUALISTS," BOSTON, U. S. A.

MANY of the gentlemen at Boston who are best known as having devoted attention to the phenomena and philosophy of Spiritualism, have recently formed themselves into a society under the above denomination. They have, moreover, stated the objects of the society, and have framed their creed or articles of belief, the former of which we will give entire, whilst of the belief we can only find room for some extracts. We shall feel much interest in observing the results and development of this body, for it has become with us a somewhat settled idea that such organizations are not likely to succeed in any permanent form, however well they may answer for a time the immediate personal needs of those who form them. It appears to us that there is no occasion for the formation of any new sect, either religious or otherwise, founded on the phenomena of Spiritualism, any more than a new sect was needed for receiving and nursing the phenomena of gravitation or of electricity. It may be convenient to meet together to discuss the phenomena and their results, and to record those which may be well established by observation, but this is a different thing to the establishment of a "Church of Spiritualists" which presupposes the discovery of some new and deep religious

mystery and mode of life, which is in fact a new religion. That this discovery has been made, is no doubt the leading spring of those who have founded this new church, but it is a position from which we dissent, and when we turn to the objects and articles of belief we are unable to discover any sufficient ground of novelty to justify the step.

It has indeed one excuse in its favour, which its promoters put forward, at the end of the articles, that it is desirable that they should by such means dis sever themselves from many of the "irregular opinions confusedly classed as Spiritualism," but this end might have been obtained by other means equally efficacious, and more logical than the founding of a new "Church," of which the chief religious article is that "religion is life." This is no new discovery in Christendom, and has been insisted on in all ages of the world of which any record has come down to us. It appears to us that the spiritual inquiry has been prosecuted in America chiefly by those of a sceptical mind, who did not previously possess much acquaintance with or have any strong belief in revealed religion, and that having once opened their minds to the reception of the great facts of Spiritualism, they have been led into a state of mind, in which they have re-discovered substantially many of the old soul-truths of all religions, and have fancied that they were entirely new because they come in rather a new dress. These truths have not come quite in the ordinary Christian form, but the soul and substance of them are independent of all forms. But though they are so true, it does not follow that they are new, or that a church must be founded to propagate them. In fact we feel the greater interest in the subject, not because it is new, but because it is so old, and because it is the connecting link between the old Spiritualism of the Bible and the miracles; because it shews us that the soul is one in all ages, and that it has such divine capacities and unfoldings; because it shews not only a possibility of inspiration in the old days, but also in the new, and that it enables us to see man as a whole, and to weld together all the religions of the world as one in essence though differing so greatly in their forms. An inquiry into spiritual laws has this tendency with us, and we would rather see it pursued in literature and in conversation, so as to extend its knowledge and its wisdom into all forms of thought, that it may work amongst them and elevate them to recognize the links by which they are all connected. It is not an exclusive truth, and those who know most of it, will be the least likely to found a Church upon it, which is only another name for a sect of small thinkers in an embryo form.

It is not because most of the present forms of religious

thought have overlaid and distorted the great truths of Christianity, that we are to follow in their track, or to be limited by their ignorance or their bigotry, or to accept even their own statement of what their Church teaches of truth. We have the right to judge for ourselves from the fountain head, and to find much more in their books than they themselves can see, and to read them by a brighter light, and a higher knowledge. In this way we have much agreement with both the objects and the articles of belief of this new society, though we do not admit the newness of their discovery; and we like them all the more because they are old, and because their main truth can be traced through the old books and the old times.

Viewed as a manifesto of opinions the articles of belief will be found of interest to our readers, as a moderate statement of the results of the observation of well informed and truthful persons who have carefully given their experience of several years inquiry into the subject.

OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY.

1. To embody knowledge concerning the spiritual welfare of man here and hereafter, in such form as will not conflict with a great variety of personal experiences, yet afford Spiritualists a common ground of unity in certain definite and accepted opinions.

2. To widen the sphere of knowledge already received, and promote the reception of ever-increasing revelation.

3. To aid in the general diffusion of Spiritualism, as at present understood by Spiritualists, and in the advancement of true religious ideas among men.

ARTICLES OF BELIEF COMMONLY ACCEPTED AS TRUTH BY SPIRITUALISTS.

The members of this society claim that the soul of man is immortal. They realize the existence and constant ministry of a spirit-world, and have evidence to prove that the immortal soul of man, at the change called death, becomes an inhabitant of the spirit-world; and that, under certain conditions, those inhabitants do communicate with their earthly friends.

It is assumed, that every human being is susceptible of influx from the world of spirits, and that each one, according to his state, is the subject of inspiration from disembodied souls, in planes of development corresponding to his own. Also, that modes of direct intercourse, by external signs, are practicable under favourable conditions. That one of these conditions, is the presence and instrumentality of special persons, whose organizations are favourable to the imponderable force supposed to be made use of by spirits to effect this mode of communion. It has been agreed

by common consent to designate the persons instrumental in this mode of communion "mediums."

Observation has shown that the power which constitutes "a medium" is a result of physical conformation, and as it appears to belong to the medium's normal state, and can neither be artificially produced, nor absolutely suppressed, so it is claimed its exercise is as legitimate as any other of the natural functions with which bodies are endowed; and as all natural gifts are designed for beneficial uses it is obviously legitimate to call this gift into exercise, use it for its most available purpose, seek its exercise as a means of communing with departed friends, and improve upon it, after the manner of ordinary culture bestowed on other natural gifts.

It is believed, that the revelations made by spirits through direct or external signs are worthy of credit only so far as the spirit is considered to be a credible witness—this credibility depending—

1. On the weight of evidence concerning the identity of the spirit.
2. On the worth of that individual spirit's testimony whilst it was known on earth: and—
3. On the quality of the communication and its harmony with reason, general fitness, and proven facts.

The statements of spirits thus tested are received by intelligent Spiritualists with neither more nor less authority than they would obtain from the same individualities on earth, although a yet larger amount of caution is demanded in the acceptance of spiritual revelations, from the fact that error and misunderstanding are liable to ensue, from the present imperfect and experimental condition of the communion.

Admitting the force of one class of evidences which in any other inquisition is allowed to be conclusive—namely, the invariable coincidence which is found in the general details of spiritual revelations, notwithstanding their coming under every conceivable variety of circumstance, person, time and place—it is reasonable to conclude that the sum of this revelation must afford the world the only reliable information they can ever obtain of the life beyond the grave: since it is given by persons in the actual experience of that life, and to friends and kindred, who would naturally be too dear to the spirits, to admit of trifling or wilful deception.

SUM OF SPIRITUAL REVELATIONS CONCERNING THE STATE OF THE SOUL IN THE WORLD OF SPIRITS.

The spirit-world consists of an infinite variety of states, somewhat analogous to the varieties of mankind on this earth,

though differing in this respect: that, whereas man here takes rank according to physical strength, intellectual power, or material possessions, in the world of spirits all degrees are regulated and all happiness proportioned to the growth and development of the soul in good and truth. So that the deeds done in the body, and the real motives that actuated them, form the book of life, according to which every soul, on its entrance to the spirit world, immediately gravitates to a sphere, or state, analogous, both in appearance and happiness, to the state of the soul in moral worth; and, although these states range from the lowest possible conditions of darkness and suffering to the highest realms of light and bliss, none of them are permanent beyond the period when it is the will of the spirit to continue in them—for life is a progress, and, being *of the spirit, not of the body*, must be equally progressive in the world of spirits as on earth, requiring only that every step in progress should be ultimated by the individual soul's efforts, and can never be achieved one soul for another, or through any ceremonial observances, or other modes than the natural order of growth that pervades creation in every department of being, including the flowering fragrance of spiritual goodness and truth.

Spirits find themselves living in this condition of retributive and compensative justice, and in tender affection for the friends who must follow them, are eager to take advantage of the present experimental system of communion, and hopeful to improve upon it, for the purpose of warning and encouraging all who are in doubt or error concerning the real issue of human life and conduct; and this society of Spiritualists, convinced of the immense importance of the revelation, act only in obedience to the highest dictates of their consciences in inviting the world to partake of the same great light that has illumined their own pathway, startling thousands from their idle repose on the sanctity of Church forms, or vicarious atonement for justification from sins, which the stern though just voice of this spiritual revelation fastens on every human soul in the name of immutable law, and individual responsibility.

OF RELIGION IN GENERAL.

This society believe that religion is life; and to make life the best religion that precept and example can be instrumental in forming, they institute this association, having in view, in the first instance, public meetings, at which qualified teachers shall rehearse and expound Spiritualistic life and teachings; establish Sabbath schools; form circles, and hold *séances* for the investigation of scientific Spiritualism; make collections of books, works of art, models and inventions emanating from spiritual sources, or conducting to mental growth; organize visiting committees to aid the sick

and sorrowful, and form the nucleus of a useful and progressive order of living religionists.

DESIGNATION OF THE SOCIETY.

As this body of Spiritualists neither subscribes to many points put forth by others in the name of Spiritualism, nor expects universal adherence to all the propositions herein set forth, the members of this association purpose to claim for themselves the right to be exempted from the irregular opinions confusedly classed as "Spiritualism," and to stand by the general principles contained in this declaration.

Therefore, in recognition thereof, and for the purposes herein set forth, we the undersigned, hereby institute this religious Society under the name of "THE LYCEUM CHURCH OF SPIRITUALISTS."

GHOSTS IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

In an article entitled "Sensorial Vision, and Vision through the Spiritual Eye," which appeared some months ago in the *Spiritual Magazine*, reference was made to certain curious visions which frequently appear to Mr. O——, an elderly gentleman residing in the country. Mr. O—— continues at various intervals to be visited by the same class of vision, and each one as it appears, together with its attendant circumstances, is carefully noted down by Miss S——, a lady residing under the same roof with Mr. O——, and like himself much interested in spiritual manifestations.

Miss S——, in a letter received a few days since by the writer of the article referred to, observes:—

"I think this neighbourhood must be favourable to spirit-manifestations. We often hear of haunted places and houses. There is a house here which we frequently pass where a Lieutenant M—— lived, which was haunted during his abode and until he 'laid the ghost.' To the truth of these circumstances various persons in the neighbourhood can bear witness.

"Our home, I frequently think, is visited by spirits, but only through passing noises, transitory and not very remarkable, still I often feel aware that this is the case; and Mr. O——'s visions seem to confirm the idea. They must be gentle spirits, however, who do not wish to alarm or annoy.

"We have large laurels in the garden, and we are in a hill country, both favourable things as regards atmospheric influences, are they not?" Miss S—— then adds:

"I send you an interesting dream that has visited the farm

servant of the sisters of a friend of ours here. I must tell you first that these sisters are just now in great trouble from having to leave the farm that has been in their family for a hundred years, that is, that the family have tenanted it during that time. The servant man, J. D., on the night of April 14th, 1862, dreamed that he was in the court-yard of the farm and found himself in the presence of two individuals, quite unknown to him, a male and female dressed in old-fashioned costume. The man wearing a linen frock buttoned down the front, exceedingly white; the woman a brown stuff rustling dress, with a white muslin handkerchief over the head and pinned under the chin. The male figure called J. D., and said, 'Take this,' giving him what appeared to be a bright metal bowl containing a light yellow fluid like oil, 'and give it to the man lying prostrate at the barn gate.' The female figure also addressed him, saying, 'I am your mistresses' mother;' and passed on into the house.

"J. D. took the bowl, and gave the contents to a sick man whom he found at the barn gate, and whom he did not know, but who immediately on receiving the liquor appeared quite restored, rose up and walked away. J. D. then heard the voice of the male figure calling to him to return the bowl, and upon taking it to the place where he had received it, he saw a door which opened in the middle to receive the bowl, and afterwards was immediately closed.

"J. D. then thought that he went into the house, and taking his seat in his usual place, saw his two mistresses near the fireplace, apparently in a state of great excitement, arising as they expressed it, from a noise which they heard, as of some one walking about upstairs. He said, 'I will go and see.' He opened the staircase door for that purpose, and on advancing and looking up the staircase he perceived the female figure whom he had before seen, leaning on the staircase rail. She addressed him, but so inaudibly that he could not understand her. J. D. then returned to his usual place in the kitchen which was in sight of the fireplace where his mistresses were, and also of the stairs, when immediately the figure opened the staircase door, and in a distinct voice, said, 'Where are they?' J. D. replied, 'Here they are, round here,' meaning round the screen near the fire, to which she replied in a provincial accent, '*I dunn't come now.*' She then withdrew, and he saw and heard no more. This was the whole of the dream, but the impression continued so strong during the remainder of the night, that no endeavour again to sleep was availing. On coming down from his chamber the next morning J. D. said to his mistresses, 'I have seen your mother.' They endeavoured to disperse what they supposed to be an illusion, but on describing the dress and the particulars of the intercourse which he had had

with her, and especially her provincial dialect, they were much amazed. They asked J. D. if he were to see a likeness of their mother should he be able to say whether it was or was not the figure of his dream. And on being shewn one, he became so convinced of the reality of the vision as to require great care on the part of his mistresses to quell his excitement and to calm his spirit.

"The male figure corresponded with the appearance of their father. J. D. had never seen either of their parents, nor heard them described. They were dead before he came to the family, or I believe to that part of the country. It took some time to restore J. D. to his usual state of mind; the rustling of the dress, and other portions of what he had thus seen and heard, constantly recurring to him. During the day he frequently turned round and looked behind, feeling as though the two figures were near to him.

"I have given you this as nearly as I can in the relator's own words. It seems to me not only an interesting dream, but one very peculiar. No doubt it came from the dead parents, anxious to comfort in some way their sorrowing children with whom it seems they could not personally communicate. The meaning of it is at present all unknown. The peculiarity of the dream, to me, is the fact of J. D. imagining his mistresses alarmed at a mysterious noise upstairs, as though he had awakened and listened with them to ghostly noises. He was not aware that he had been seeing spirits in his dream until he was up and about, and yet even in his dream there appears to have been a suggestion in his mind of something of the kind. Can any one interpret this dream? Does the bowl have reference to the bowl of Solomon? The 'golden bowl is broken,' or the liquid like oil, to the 'oil of joy,' that is to be given for mourning."

In a subsequent letter, dated June 20th, Miss S—— writes:—

"Yesterday, Mr. O—— saw our friend, and obtained permission for you to make what use you like of the dream for the *Spiritual Magazine* without giving names. He also brought away with him the following narrative of further visions to add to the account of the dream. I have no doubt that more will yet be seen, as the apparition has not yet been able to communicate her wishes.

"*Wednesday, June 11th, 1862.*—A. P. (one of J. D.'s mistresses) had retired to rest some ten minutes, but before going to sleep she felt a chilliness come over her, seemingly of a death-like nature, and a considerable sensation of pressure, whereupon without the use of her natural sight, she saw her bedroom door open with no more noise than the sudden action of a hand laid on the handle would produce. Immediately a figure entered the

room, which she recognized as possessing a most extraordinary likeness to her mother, the remembrance of whose features—she having died nearly twenty years ago—had grown faint in her memory, but which on the appearance of this figure became revived. The figure was completely clothed in white. Her countenance equally being light, with the exception of her deep grey eyes, which had formerly characterized her whilst living. The figure immediately addressed herself to A. P., but in so low a tone (although using her finger by way of enforcing her communication upon her daughter) as to be inaudible. A. P., awed by the cold and pressure and by the moonlight character of the apparition, could not summon courage to say “Mother.” She turned in bed towards her sister, but was induced, she says from fear of distressing her, to withhold the cause of her alarm. Nevertheless, the whole time, and for a considerable time, too, the presence of her mother remained visible to her mind’s eye,—the movements of her lips still indicating an intention to make some important communication when the necessary conditions were developed, so that she might be able at the same time comfortably to receive it, as well as perceive her mother’s presence.

“‘J. P.’”

“‘*Sunday Morning, June 15th, 1862.*—J. D. was again surprised by the same peculiar feeling as on the former occasion, when, through it, his attention was directed to the presence of the female figure calling herself the mother of his mistresses. On this occasion she was clothed in white, herself of an extraordinary bright countenance, and apparently happy. Her presence continued visible in his bed room for a considerable time. Thrice she moved to the window, and returned to him again. At length she was lost to his sight, but left a strong impression of the visit behind in his mind.

“‘J. P.’”

“‘*Thursday, June 19th, 1862.*—E. P., sister to the before noted A. P., was visited by the same appearance, which she says she immediately and unmistakably recognized as the likeness of her mother. To her she appeared in white, with a bright and radiant expression of countenance. Her attempts to make a communication were of so gentle a nature, that although the tones were audible, yet the articulation was too faint to make known her message, or to unfold the reason of her appearance.

“‘(Signed) J. P.’”

THE DEATH-WATCH, OR TICKING INSECT.

THE following question and answer appear in a recent number of the *Herald of Progress* :—

“D. B. B., *Dunkirk, N. Y.*—Friend Davis.—Is it true that an approaching death in a house is prophesied of or indicated by the ticking of the insect called the ‘Death-watch?’ If so, by what means is the fact communicated by the little creature?”

“Answer.—There is always some real foundation for every prevalent superstition. The basis of this long-standing notion is this: The insect in question (*Anobium Teselatum*) is most frequently, because most easily, heard in the stillness of a sick room, or during the repose of the night, when the house is noiseless. The painful sensitiveness and anxiety which usually attend all sickness in a family, lend intensity and emphasis to the action of the imagination. From this cause it is common for many minds to be psychologized by imaginary signs of coming misfortune and death.

“The ticking of this little *borer*, a grayish-brown insect, is made by striking its head against some hard substance on which it stands. The object of such ticking, which occurs mostly in the spring-time, is to bring the sexes together. The sound is really a telegraphic call of affection. There is no prophecy or other sign in the operation.”

INTERNAL RESPIRATION.—SWEDENBORG’S EXPERIENCE.

THE clinching proof of the restoration of Internal Respiration is the experience of Swedenborg—there can be no mistake about this. He details his experience as to his inner breathing very minutely. He lays particular stress on the fact, and shows its fundamental importance as the condition of his revelations. He says, “I was introduced by the Lord into Internal Respirations.” He gives many interesting statements concerning inspiration generally. He says, “it was also represented to me by a kind of spiritual light writing, that the will influences the understanding in inspiration (or breathing); namely, that the thoughts then fly from the body, and in expiration are, as it were, driven out, or carried straight forth, so that the thoughts have their alternate play like the respiration of the lungs; because inspiration belongs to the will and expiration to nature. Thus the thoughts have their alternate changes in every change of the inspiration. Hence if evil thoughts occur you have only to draw in the breath and the evil thoughts depart. From this we

may also perceive the cause why in strong meditation the lungs are kept in equilibrium more quiet than in a condition of nature, the inspirations then being quicker than the expirations; at other times the reverse is the case. Furthermore in ecstacy, or trance, the man holds his breath when the thoughts are as it were asleep. Likewise in sleep when both in-breathing and the out-breathing belong to the natural, then respirations arise which flow from above. The same may also be inferred from the cerebrum, because in inspiration all the internal organs are expanded with the brain itself, and the thoughts thence obtain their origin and their course."—*Swedenborg's Diary*.

So much as to the philosophy of breathing generally. But in other places he is more specific as to Internal Respiration proper. He declares that it was, in his case, the necessary means of open intercourse with spirits and angels. He states this particularly as to leave no room to doubt that such or similar communication as he enjoyed, is impossible without it. In reference to internal breathing, he says, "the design of all this was that every kind of state, every kind of sphere, and every kind of society, *particularly the more interior*, might find in my own fit respiration, which should come into play without any reflection on my part, and that thus a medium of intercourse might be afforded with spirits and angels."—*Swedenborg's Diary*, 3,461.

What stronger proof can we have than this, that Internal Respiration is indispensable to the higher and to be desired intercourse with the spiritual world? But Swedenborg declares that his Internal Respiration was not a specialty, but if men were in faith and love to the Lord a similar state of the respiration might be induced on them—that an interior way towards heaven might be opened (which is now shut) to all men, which by creation is their birthright. We arrive at this conclusion, *viz.*, that so far as Swedenborg was introduced into interior breathing he was restored to the primeval condition of humanity, as he evidently entertained the hope and belief that his own condition in respect to life, breath and illumination, would ultimately become the condition of the men of the Lord's New Church on earth. And his experiences, and the communications through him assert that

"When the perfect man has come,
Earth and heaven will be his home;
With material senses fine,
He shall dwell in space and time.
Soul and body then shall be
Modulated harmony."

It is very clear, from Swedenborg's experience, that he never could have open *interior* intercourse with spirits and angels *except through the opening of the internal respiratories*. Nor can

any one else. So far as the bestowment of this gift of Internal Respiration is concerned his was not an exceptional case; on the contrary, he constantly asserts it to be an inherent capability of human nature, to be developed through the process of regeneration.

Why should it be deemed incredible that mankind are destined to undergo organic changes? What is more evident than this, that man is deteriorated, and that his natural part will become a fitter organ for the inflow and outflow of spiritual thoughts and feelings? Nothing created in higher moulds ever goes out of existence. He possesses inherently, in potency, all the attributes of his nature. He is a wild rose, with simple petals. But the skilful gardener can take the wild rose, and, by careful culture, convert it into a composite flower, giving it a ruby crown and making it the queen of the floral kingdom. Nothing created is ever lost; and what has been may be again. As the garden daisy sleeps in the bosom of the field gowan—"wee crimson tippit flower"—so, vast possibilities lie dormant in the human form, awaiting development. Human nature is a degenerate flower. By degeneration complex forms may become simple forms, may become *mal*-forms. Such is man as to soul, hence also as to body. The corrupt heart and clouded intellect has given to man, in many races, the exterior development of the brute, for as men sink in barbarism they lose the human form divine, and approximate toward that of the lower creatures. The entire organism becomes deteriorated and injuriously affected by the perverted conditions of the spirit. Take for example the present condition of man's facial organs, as compared with those of the most ancient people described by Swedenborg, and we shall see that not only are man's breathing functions changed, but the features of his face also. The face of the most ancient man was a true index to the state of his mind. It was impossible for him to dissemble, or conceal his feelings or his thoughts; nor was there occasion why he should—because he was pure and good. The purity and goodness of his heart lay mirrored in his countenance. In our age it is not so. The aim is to conceal rather than to reveal the real state of the interiors.

"The man that shows his heart,
Is hooted for his modesty, and scorned."

The reason why the man of the most ancient church expressed the working of his thoughts and affections in the face, as given by Swedenborg is as follows: "All the involuntary principle of the cerebellum was manifested in the face; and at that time they knew not how to exhibit any other thing in the countenance, than as heaven flowed into the involuntary tendencies, and thence into the will." But as man gradually fell away from a state of integrity, as to his interiors, certain facial changes took place,

until at last the fibres leading from the cerebellum, which had acted involuntarily, ceased to act in this manner, being overpowered by the fibres leading from the cerebrum, which had been translated to the face. This change of these fibres respectively gave man the power of masking his real feelings and intentions, and thus of playing the hypocrite. Who does not know that those who are skilled in crime have perfect control over their involuntary fibres of the cerebellum? as those who are in infancy, and in states of simplicity and innocence, still to a great extent reveal their emotions involuntarily in their faces. An honest man's countenance is still a certificate of his character. If the face of man becomes bony and hard, broken and brutish as he descends in the scale of morals and intelligence, is it not evident, as he returns to a state of love to God and man, that this perverted condition of the facial fibres will, as a consequence, change; and that there will be the free and full use of both sets of fibres, giving truth and beauty, and transparency to the sadly marred human countenance?

The relation of the face to life puts this question beyond dispute. For a full understanding of this interesting subject we beg to refer the reader to the *Arcana Cælestia*, 4,326. It is a matter of fact, confirmed by observation, that organic changes of the face correspond to and are contemporaneous with changes of the spirit. We refer to these facts simply as an illustration of our subject.

That physical changes are to be expected, is in the highest degree rational and philosophical. Man, so to speak, is the garden daisy degenerated to a field "gowan," but having in him the latent capability for becoming the garden daisy again. There will come "a restitution of all things," when the degenerate plant will blossom as the rose, and man have his breath again, with all primeval conditions, and blessings of body and spirit—of body because of spirit.

RESPIRO.

ANECDOTE OF BYRON.

IN 1811, Byron, writing to Murray, says, "My old school and form-fellow Peel, the Irish Secretary, told me he saw me in St. James's-street: I was then in Turkey. A day or two afterwards he pointed out to his brother a person across the way, and said 'There is the man I took for Byron;' his brother answered 'Why, it is Byron, and no one else.' I was at this time seen to write my name in the palace book. I was then ill of a malarial fever. If I had died, here would have been a ghost story!"

OVER THE RIVER.

Over the river they beckon to me,
Loved ones who've crossed to the further side;
The gleam of their snowy robes I see,
But their voices are lost in the dashing tide.
There's one with ringlets of sunny gold,
And eyes the reflection of Heaven's own blue,
He crossed in the twilight, gray and cold,
And the pale mist hid him from mortal view:
We saw not the angels who met him there,
The gates of the city we could not see.
Over the river, over the river,
My brother stands waiting to welcome me.

Over the river, the boatman pale,
Carried another—the household pet;
Her brown curls wave in the gentle gale—
Darling Addie, I see her yet.
She crossed on her bosom her dimpled hands,
And fearlessly entered the phantom bark;
We felt it glide from the silver sands,
And all our sunshine grew strangely dark.
We know she is safe on the further side,
Where all the ransomed and angels be;
Over the river, the mystic river,
My childhood's idol is waiting for me.

Do none return from those quiet shores,
Who cross with the boatman, cold and pale?
We hear the dip of the golden oars,
And catch a gleam of the snowy sail.
And lo! they have passed from our yearning hearts,
They cross the stream, and are gone for aye;
We may not sunder the vail apart
That hides from our vision the gates of day.
We only know that their barks no more
May sail with us o'er life's stormy sea,
Yet somewhere I know on the unseen shore,
They watch and beckon and wait for me.

And I sit and think when the sunset's gold
Is flushing river and hill and shore,
I shall one day stand by the water cold,
And list for the sound of the boatman's oar.
I shall watch for a gleam of the flapping sail;
I shall hear the boat as it gains the strand;
I shall pass from sight with the boatman, pale,
To the better shore of the spirit-land.
I shall know the loved who have gone before,
And joyfully sweet will the meeting be,
When over the river, the peaceful river,
The Angel of Death shall carry me.

IN MEMORIAM.


MADAME ALEXANDRINA HOME, the wife of Mr. Daniel Dungla Home, who is so well known to our readers, passed from earth on the 3rd July last, at the Chateau Laroche, Dordogne, France, the residence of her sister, the Countess Luboff Kouchelet Besborodka, in the twenty-second year of her age.

Mrs. Home was the youngest daughter of the General Count de Kroll, of Russia, and she was the god-daughter of the late Emperor Nicholas. She was educated at the Institute of St. Catherine at the same time as the present Countess de Morny, of Paris. Mr. Home, who had been at several of the Courts of Europe, where he was received with much distinction, and where the marvellous phenomena which occur in his presence excited deep attention, was at Rome in the spring of 1858 for the benefit of his health, and there first saw the lady who became his wife on the 1st of August of that year. The marriage took place at St. Petersburg, and was celebrated in the presence of M. Alexandre Dumas, who went from Paris on purpose to be present, and to officiate as godfather to Mr. Home, according to the custom of the Russian Church. The Emperor Alexander also was represented there by two of his aides-de-camp whom he sent as groomsmen, and the Emperor presented to Mr. Home on this happy occasion a magnificent diamond ring of great value. On the birth of the only child of the marriage, a son, the Emperor evinced his continued interest in Mr. and Mrs. Home by presenting to them as a memento of his friendship a ring of emeralds and diamonds. Mr. and Mrs. Home thus commenced their married life with all the outward accessories of station and wealth together with hosts of friends, as a matter of course, whilst the measure of their happiness was completed by that calm domestic bliss, which is the purest source of earthly enjoyment, and to which his kindly and tender nature contributed its full share. They could not but be happy, for their affection was pure as it was sincere, and when their union was blessed by the birth of their little son there was no more to hope for, but to bring him up worthily to be a partaker in their happiness.

In the midst, however, of these bright human hopes and anticipations, the decree went forth that her days were numbered. About eighteen months before her departure, the physician who was called in on the occasion of some trifling illness, as it was supposed, detected, to the surprise and grief of all who loved her, such undoubted signs of consumption in her constitution that in all human probability her life could not be of long duration. Such tidings to a young and happy woman, surrounded by everything that can make outward existence attractive, would, in

ordinary circumstances, have come as the direst calamity; but it was not so in the case of Mrs. Home. Though at that time only in her twenty-first year, she received the announcement with entire calmness. God's will be done, was the cheerful law of her life, and He who had hitherto made that life so rich would not fail, she knew, to continue His love and mercy to her in that higher life to which He was calling her. Nothing but the deepest religious conviction of the Supreme Wisdom and Love can bring the human soul into a state of submissive obedience to His otherwise apparently severe and mysterious decrees. Let us now see how the Divine Father had led and schooled His young disciple into that highest, that profoundest of all knowledge, the firm possession of which makes obedience and submission easy, and keeps the soul calm and even joyful under the most startling and adverse circumstances. We shall then in part, if not fully understand whence came the strange, and apparently almost unnatural, willingness to depart from the earthly life amidst its most attractive circumstances. *She was a deeply-believing Spiritualist.* God's love had made known to her the reality of the spiritual world; she had been permitted to solve the great, mysterious, and perplexing riddle of the Hereafter, and so loyal was she to the knowledge which had thus been given her, that she was ready to attest it in life or in death. Like all experienced Spiritualists she knew that the outward life, be its term longer or shorter, is but a school in which God wills to train the immortal being to a higher knowledge—is but a pilgrimage, or passage by which He is willing to conduct it to another and a still happier home. She knew that in that other state of existence, though unclothed by the body, and apparently separated from the beloved on earth, she might yet be permitted to watch over and love them as their guardian angel, and to be in the close companionship of those who had gone before—of those living and glorified spirits who should lead her to the throne of grace and love ineffable. If it be the highest heroism to meet death with unflinching courage, this amiable, gentle, young woman, this child of affluence and fortune, displayed an almost unequalled degree of this noble quality of mind, and so doing, proved how strong and all-sustaining in life's extremity is the faith of the Christian Spiritualist.

The first startling intelligence that her disease was mortal came to a mind so prepared with wholly abated force. The sting was already taken from death; nor through the whole after-trials and sufferings of her physical frame did she lose her equanimity or firm confidence in the future. This calmness, indeed, became the most striking feature of her long and painful illness. It was so profound and marked as to be almost phenomenal, and was noticed as such by the eminent physicians who attended her



in London, and subsequently in France, as well as by the Bishop of Perigueux, who frequently visited her during the latter part of her earthly life. The last sacraments were administered to her by the Bishop, who wept like a child, and who remarked that "though he had been present at many a death-bed for Heaven he had never seen one equal to hers."

Whilst residing in London the remarkable spiritual gifts and manifestations exhibited through Mr. Home, and the many attractive qualities of his young and lovely wife had naturally gathered around them a large circle of friends to whom the singular exhibition of her calmness, her meekness, her playful winning ways, even in the midst of suffering, and the joyful anticipation with which she anticipated her removal, were if possible, a greater anomaly, and almost, for the time, cast into the shade the wonderful gifts and powers of her husband. If Addison called at his death-bed his infidel son-in-law that, witnessing his composure, he might learn with how much calmness a Christian could die, here disbelievers in Spiritualism looking on this gifted young woman, saw with wonder not only how calmly, but how joyously the Christian Spiritualist could face death. Another equally anomalous feature to the Protestant Christian was not to find in her the self-depreciation of the guilt-awakened sinner; not to hear on her lips the usual phraseology of the dying but suffering saint; no mention made of the atonement; of the works of grace on her soul, of the sufferings of a crucified Saviour for her sake. Nevertheless, with the simplicity of a little child who accepts the Divine Love as his natural gift, she loved the Saviour and rejoiced in Him, responding to His unspeakable goodness with the whole allegiance of her soul, but Gethsemane and the bloody sweat of the crucifixion were not present to her mind; the agony and woe had no place in her experience. She was, it must be remembered, the embodiment of her own Greek church; of the church in which she was educated, the most ancient faith which has ever recognized the Saviour less as the Crucified than the Arisen, the triumphant over suffering, sin, and death, as Victor not the Victim, as the Lord who said to his chosen ones "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven!" Such appears to me, who frequently saw her during this portion of her short stay on earth, was the fact which made her relationship to the Saviour so joyous, whilst her own single-heartedness left her free from all established phraseology or any wish to produce effect, and these happily combined with her actual knowledge of spiritual existence, strengthened that remarkable state of calmness and cheerfulness with which she waited the close of her outward life. Her Saviour had indeed risen for her, and with the unquestioning, unreasoning faith of a loving, obedient child.

like nature, she was not only willing to go when He called her, but cheerfully to give up all at His bidding, knowing that a more enlarged, a more glorious sphere of usefulness and angel ministrations would be unfolded to her through His love, and that thus she should be enabled more tenderly and more effectually to watch over and become a blessing to the beloved ones whom she left behind.

During that short but interesting time of her declining health in London, her remarkable unselfishness became another endearing characteristic to all her friends. She made, even amidst her increasing sufferings, constant exertions to see them, and *séances* were held frequently at the house where she and her husband were then residing, in which she took part. On these occasions many wonderful and touchingly beautiful incidents occurred, and few, if any, who thus met her, but retain with tender and affectionate regard some lovely flower or fragrant spray—an emblem of herself—which was presented to her by spirit-hands, as a little memento for each.

In the earlier stages of her disease her spiritual perception began to open, and she commenced, and throughout her illness continued to see and converse with the denizens of the spiritual world. Her most frequent visitants were her mother and her father, and the mother of her husband. From them she received the most loving messages of endearment, and the most cheering words of welcome to her spirit home. She was also constantly attended by a veiled female spirit, whom she did not know, but whose very presence gave her great comfort, though she never spoke, nor raised her veil. Mrs. Home was told that this kind guardian spirit would continue veiled until the last, when the veil would be thrown over her own new-born spirit, to keep her from the sight of the tears and mourning around the bed where her body would be lying. Through the six months previous to her passing away, the veil was slowly and gradually gathered from the feet of the guardian spirit towards the head, until two days before her release, when for the last time she saw the spirit with the veil gathered in the form of a crown about her head, but with one part, as a festoon, still concealing her face.

On one occasion eight persons, who were in the room with Mrs. Home, saw the hand and arm of the spirit to the shoulder, the appearance being that of a luminous body, most beautifully perfect in form, and covered as if with a veil of light. The eminent composer M. Magnus, of Paris, came to the Chateau Laroche to visit Mrs. Home during the last three weeks of her earthly stay, and almost daily she asked him to play for her, and whilst lying placidly listening to his music, her face assumed an almost beatified expression whilst she kept time to the music with

her hands. On one occasion she said, when he had finished playing, "Those strains are very beautiful, but I shall soon hear more beautiful still."

Frequently also, during the first three months and the last two months of her illness, not only she, but all those about her heard delicious strains of spirit music, sounding like a perfect harmony of vocal sounds. During the last month, also, the words were most distinctly heard, and were recognized as the chants for the dying used in the Russian Church.

She departed on Thursday, the 3rd of July, and on the Saturday morning following, her little boy, of three years of age, said to his nurse on awakening, "I have seen mamma, and she is quite well now. She is with God, and she told me that my uncle Gregoire, and my aunt Luba are my godfather and godmother, and that they would be very good to me, and I must love them."

At her funeral, the service at which was performed by the vicar-general of the diocese, four of the men-servants of her sister asked each to lead a horse of the hearse to the burial ground, saying that they could not allow hired persons to touch the dear body of her who had ever had a kind word and a loving look for all. The peasantry, instead of, as is customary, throwing earth upon the coffin, first covered it with flowers, the fittest for her last garment, and fittest for the expression of their love.

Such is a brief memorial of a short but lovely life on earth. But short as it was, rarely has the oldest and most experienced orthodox Christian attained to a higher degree of religious consciousness, clearness and trust in God, than did this young and attractive woman, by those very means and teachings which the religious world as yet so much ignores and questions.

Blessed, however, be God the Saviour for every fresh revelation and manifestation of his Divine life, and for every renewed teaching of his Holy Spirit.

MARY HOWITT

Correspondence.

THE ORIGIN OF FREEMASONRY.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

SIR,—Could we carry our investigations back far enough, I think it would be found that the mysteries of most, if not all, of the secret organizations of the middle ages, of classical antiquity, and especially of the remote East, would be found closely connected with occult and profound spiritual philosophy, derived wholly, or in part, from spiritual sources. On recently mentioning this idea to a friend who has devoted much time and literary research to the prosecution of this inquiry (the results of which I hope will be published at no very remote time) he entirely concurred in this conclusion. I am led to this remark from the art

on "The Rosicrucians," in your last number. Perhaps the subjoined account of the original principles of freemasonry, by one of that body, the celebrated Heinrich Zechokke (referred to in another paper), may serve as a fitting pendant to it, and stimulate others to prosecute inquiries that may further augment our knowledge of these little-understood subjects.—Yours, &c. T. S.

"When I visited Freiburg in the year 1819, I made the journey in company with several gentlemen from Aarau who were about to be initiated into the masonic degree of master, at the Freiburg Lodge. On the way we conversed much of freemasonry; for they knew me for one of the initiated. At Freiburg I was compelled, in spite of much resistance, to be present at the solemn initiation of my fellow-travellers; although, since leaving Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, I had never been inside a lodge, and had totally forgotten all the usual customs and ceremonies.

"In order to become better acquainted with one another after this, we resolved on our return to Aarau to spend an evening every week in social intercourse together. We there conversed on politics and literature, foreign and domestic, and sometimes also on freemasonry. I did not attempt to deny that the latter tendencies and pursuits of most masonic societies seemed to me to have little, either agreeable or edifying in them. Some were engaged in the pursuit of alchemy; others were absorbed in mystical theology; others in charlatanry of different kinds. All imagined mysterious powers in their ancient symbols and empty formulas; and I did not deny that in the high meaning which I attributed to the institution of freemasonry, I was, perhaps, doing the same thing. I placed this institution between those of Church and State, as a connecting link between the two. This theory excited the astonishment, though not the anger of my friends. Although they themselves regarded the mystic society as a venerable and holy means for the promotion of brotherly kindness among men, yet they knew that the institution was generally regarded with hostile eyes by the guardians of altars and thrones.

"I endeavoured to explain myself. We children of men are on earth already members of two worlds, the outer or material, and the inner or spiritual. In the outer world we dwell together with equal rights and equal duties, but with unequal gifts and powers. This is the natural and original relation of mankind. By our equality of rights and duties we are rendered brethren; by our inequalities of gifts and powers, useful and indispensable to each other. And this necessity of association founded families, hordes, tribes, and states. But under the influence of various climates, customs, interests, and passions, the original relations of mankind are either gradually obliterated, or so distorted as to stand at last in opposition both to nature and reason. Families, tribes, and states are hostile to each other, acknowledging no

longer their mutual brotherhood; the relation of brother is exchanged for that of master and slave.

"In the supernal world, or in the character of spirits, no longer confined to the sphere of the finite and the temporary, we recognize, indeed, the truth of our universal equality and brotherhood; we feel ourselves children of the same great Father, in his boundless and wonderful mansion of the universe. This original relation of all men to God and eternity, is the foundation of religion; it is the truth divinely revealed within us, and unveiled by Jesus. It is eternally in accordance with nature and reason; for the laws of nature and reason are the laws of God. But as the social, so, also, the religious relation has become distorted in a thousand ways, and has been made contrary both to nature and reason. There have arisen various religions, various churches in every religion, various sects in every church, and bigotry and spiritual pride have usurped the names of piety and zeal.

"The restoration of the original social and spiritual relations of men, that is to say, to brotherhood in rights, hopes, and duties, without regard to differences in race, country, or creed; the reformation of that holy bond which social and religious passions and prejudices had severed so long; this were an object, I said, worthy the efforts of the wise and good. The masons of the middle ages, and afterwards the members of other guilds, as they went from town to town practising their trades, and met and conversed with each other, learned to regard each other as brethren, as world-citizens, without regard to difference of language and country. Probably this was the germ of the future institution of freemasonry, as is seen in the present form of the lodge. There the mason's hut appears as the symbol of the world, into which the holy light streams from the East; and every inmate of which, severed elsewhere from the rest, by origin, country, rank, property, and creed, is there the brother and equal of all. Wherever, in ancient or modern times, a few men united, though but for moments, and in a narrow circle, in striving towards a restoration of the original relations of mankind, and towards a realization of the ideal—there was manifested the secret and beautiful meaning of freemasonry.

"The lodge with all its symbols, is only the *form* of the masonic thoughts; the state is only the form of the social union; the church, of the religious principle. These forms, as belonging to the sensuous world, may vary; but the original thought, the spiritual essence of each, are alone the *absolute* and the *real*.

"The church is an institution for the embodiment of the idea of our filial relation to God, and our fraternal relation to each other. Prince and beggar without distinction of social rank, which cannot exist in the world of spirits, prostrate themselves

in common adoration before the Universal Father; they hear in common the call to self-sanctification, and receive in common the consecration for eternity. All, in relation to God, acknowledge themselves brothers and sisters. But outside the church, the inequalities of social life again assert their dominion. These, which were forgotten only within the walls of the temple, the mosque, and the synagogue, vanish likewise within the masonic lodge. Thus church and lodge are closely related; only that in the lodge the distinction of creeds is also forgotten, and is not permitted to sever the brothers.

"The state is a means to society for the more rapid and easier development of its faculties, by the right of every man to strive towards such a development, and by his right to a security from hindrance in so doing, while he avoids the hindering of others. The state is an institution for the general use, for the common benefit of all its citizens; for the leading of them forwards towards the perfection of human existence. Such, too, is the duty and object of the masonic lodges; they would cut and polish the rough stone of human civilisation, to build with it the temple of universal harmony.

"Whilst church and state, although both necessary institutions for the good of mankind, are frequently found in direct hostility to each other, through the errors, passions, or blindness of their guardians, Freemasonry places itself as a reconciler between them, meeting with its divine or purely spiritual side the religious element in all, and with its earthly or temporal side, the social or political element. Yet it casts from it everything *merely* political, everything originating in the laws and constitutions of particular nations, because it has to do only with the original relations of men. In the same way it casts from it everything *merely* theological, because it regards only the original relations of man to God and eternity, without distinction of creed or church.

"In this spirit lived, and do still live, thousands of excellent men, genuine freemasons, whether they ever saw the inside of a lodge or not; whilst thousands who *have* seen it, remain as far as ever from becoming genuine masons, just as in various nations thousands of pious souls have lived in the spirit of Jesus, without ever having visited a Christian temple, whilst thousands of Christians, zealous *in* church and *for* the church, would never be owned as disciples by their Divine Master. For, as many take appearances for realities, the means for the end, and church rites for religion, so many among us mistake the ceremonies of the lodge for freemasonry.

"Such were the thoughts and views which I expressed to my friends, and, at their request, afterwards communicated in writing."

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

25th June, 1862.

SIR,—I beg to send you the following account of a *séance* held with Madame Louise Besson, the trance medium, at her residence, No. 2, Harpur Street, Theobald's Road, W.C., on Monday evening last, the 23rd. The sitters were two ladies, and a gentleman, and myself, Madame B. making the fifth. The raps were very loud, and the movement of the table powerful. In the course of the evening, it lifted entirely off the floor several times. One or two sentences were given by means of the alphabet, asserting that the spirit relatives of those sitting were present. All the foregoing however were incidents similar to those of other sittings. The principal manifestations of the evening being a series of touches, or pats, more or less slight, on my feet, extending from first to last for full half-hour. On being first touched, I looked down, and saw a spirit-light glide away from my feet, and vanish by the side of Madame B. The pats then became more frequent, and from being inaudible, they, at my request, were struck sufficiently loud for all the sitters to hear them. Nothing whatever could be seen; but I distinctly felt each finger of the open hand on the leather, during each pat, and in a few instances each foot was struck at the same time by different hands. The room was not in darkness; twilight being sufficient till about nine, when a lamp was used. Our hands were all resting on the top of the table during the above occurrences, and nobody else was in the room. I write this at the request of the sitters, and remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
5, Westmoreland Place, THOMAS SHERRATT, JUN.
Westbourne Grove North, W., Bayswater.

To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."

June 27th, 1862.

SIR,—Having heard much on the subject of Spiritualism, and read Mr. Owen's interesting work on that subject, &c., I am induced to ask a favour, which should be granted, and the result be a correct answer, will do all that I require for the confirmation of my own belief, and that of several friends, who now have sealed copies of the following questions, which perhaps some medium may be found capable of answering.—I am, Sir, your most obedient servant,
W. A.

QUESTIONS.

1. Where (*i. e.*, in what country and parish) was Edward A., who died 1693, baptized?
2. Who was the father of——?
3. What were the three last words uttered by S. E., who died in 1859.

[The foregoing letter is a specimen of many letters we receive, and as to which we think our correspondents are a little exacting in requiring gratuitous aid from a spiritual source as the condition of their believing what is, after all, a fact, whether they believe it or not. We very much doubt if their belief is worth purchasing on such terms. Does our correspondent think there was *only one* person whose Christian name was Edward, and the initial of whose surname was A., who died in 1693, baptized; or that *only one* person bearing the initials S. E. died in 1859? Or does he think that spirits are omniscient, and infallibly know what the persons were thus vaguely intimated? The climax of this sort of thing is, however, reached in Question 2, the blank in which probably should have been filled up with the words "Zebedee's children."—ED.]